

# THE FORTNIGHTLY

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## BARGAINING WITH JAPAN

BY FREDA UTLEY

THE denouncement by the United States of its Commercial Treaty with Japan should have made Great Britain realize the importance of the Far Eastern conflict in American eyes. Yet the debates in Parliament at the end of the session showed an almost total unawareness of the effect which our attitude in the Tokio negotiations is likely to have upon our relations with the United States. Mr. Noel Baker's speech on August 4 emphasized the "high moral and political importance" of the issue at Tientsin, and the disastrous effect in Europe of any further demonstration that "for us aggression was still only aggression when we were ourselves menaced by attack". But even he failed to point out how fatal an effect any bargain concluded with Japan at China's expense would have on Anglo-American relations.

The implications of the fact that the United States faces West across the Pacific, as well as East across the Atlantic, are insufficiently realized in this country; nor is it understood how general is the mistrust in America of British Far Eastern policy. During a recent lecture tour in the United States I was continually reminded that Mr. Stimson had been rebuffed by Sir John Simon when he wanted Great Britain to make a joint stand with the United States against the Japanese rape of Manchuria. America I was told, could not lay herself open to a second rebuff; this time we must make the first move. Since the present war began there has been a deep-rooted suspicion in the United States that it was the aim of British policy to strike a bargain with Japan under the guise of mediation, giving Japan domination over North China in return for a promise to respect British interests in Central and South China. Both Mr. Chamberlain's and Lord Halifax's recent speeches in Parliament must have gone far to justify this suspicion. Mr.

Chamberlain said that a successful outcome of the negotiations in Tokio "is quite as much to the interest of Japan as of this country" and pointed only to attacks on "British interests and rights" as making "a successful outcome difficult if not impossible". He went on to say that "the real goal we have in mind is to find some equitable settlement of the struggle which is going on in China". Lord Halifax's speech, on August 3, was even more ominous. He said:

"The Government had been fully prepared to recognize the special interests and position of Japan (in China) both geographically and economically . . . I suggest that our goal (in the Far East) must be, if we can, to try and bring about a just and equitable settlement of the present dispute. The time may come when we could act as mediator . . . I do not believe that it is beyond the power of men of goodwill to find a solution with good justice for China, and taking into account the interests of other Powers concerned in the Far East".

What is this "good justice" for China which is to be secured by friendly negotiations with the Japanese, as a preliminary to which we have promised not to "obstruct" the operations of Japan's massacring armies? Obviously by "good" justice Lord Halifax means something very different to justice. Justice requires that all the Japanese forces withdraw from China, if not also an indemnity for China. But China is the Cinderella of the nations and "good justice" for her is perhaps thought to be something a little better than subjection of all her territory to Japan. In the eyes of the British government the Chinese are, it would seem, a colonial people destined to be subjected, whilst the Japanese, although their skins are no less yellow, are apparently thought of as the equals of the Western Imperialist Powers and as entitled to "special interests" in China as their sphere. Even in the view of the Labour and Liberal parties the fate of China's four hundred millions is obviously of infinitely less importance than the fate of the Poles, the Roumanians or some other white nation.

One reason why the American attitude to Japan is firmer than ours, and their policy towards China more liberal, is no doubt the fact that American interests in China are mainly commercial whilst the main concern of the British Government is not trade, but the preservation of the £250 million of British investments in China. The United States has only some £40 million invested in China, but her trade there is larger than ours. Certain



powerful British interests, realizing that a China which had managed to defeat Japan, would demand the rendition of the Concessions and an end to extra-territorialism and the other privileges enjoyed by foreigners in China, see a Chinese victory as only one degree better than a Japanese domination of China. They therefore favour a compromise peace. But Americans see a free China modernizing herself under her own government as the potentially largest market in the world for American exports. Hence their more wholehearted support of China.

There is little doubt that President Roosevelt's action in clearing the decks for a severance of trade relations with Japan, was taken to stop Mr. Chamberlain from slipping any further down the perilous slope towards co-operation with Japan in scrapping the Nine Power Treaty which guarantees the integrity of China and the Open Door. It was also intended to hearten the forces of Chinese resistance so grievously discouraged by the Anglo-Japanese preliminary agreement published three days earlier.

Surprise has been expressed in many quarters in this country that the United States Administration should have taken this action against Japan, in view of the refusal of Congress to amend the Neutrality Act so as to enable the United States to stand with the European democracies against German and Italian aggression. This surprise is due, not only to a failure to appreciate how great is the indignation in America against Japan, but also to a misunderstanding of the attitude of American isolationists. To wish to avoid involving the United States again in a world war is not inconsistent with a desire to stop the United States supplying an aggressor with war materials. To have amended the Neutrality Act as President Roosevelt desired would, it was felt, mean that sooner or later Americans would be required to shed their blood in the quarrels of Europe. Some of the best known writers in the United States, of the Stuart Chase and Charles Beard schools of thought, insist that Americans should never again involve themselves in the irreconcilable conflicts of the Old World, to escape which many of their forefathers crossed the Atlantic. They see the European conflict as one between the old imperialisms of Britain and France and the new imperialism of Germany and Italy, and



do not believe that the next war will settle anything or be followed by a better peace than the last one. Above all, they fear that if the United States is once again involved in a world war the forces of reaction will gather strength as they did in the last one, and that there will then be no hope of reforming the economic and social structure of America. Already rearmament is destroying the New Deal and any prospect of radical reform in the direction of a planned society.

In the Far East the issue is a very different one. Here it is not a question of aiding one protagonist against another in a future world war, but one of ceasing to aid the aggressor in a war actually in progress. Nor can such action as the severance of trade relations with Japan be thought of as likely to involve the United States in war, since there is no retaliatory action which a Japan deprived of war materials can take against America. Moreover, Japanese aggression violates a Treaty of which the United States is itself a signatory, and Japan's actions directly injure American commercial interests. It is true that large profits are being derived by some Americans from the provisioning of Japan's war machine, but it is realized that these profits are temporary and that a Japanese victory would mean an end to American trade with China.

Over and above considerations of commercial interest, and fears of advancing Japanese aggression, is the sympathy which most Americans feel for China. This sympathy cannot be ignored in a country with as democratic a form of government as the United States. It would probably be an exaggeration to say that Americans are as aware of the sufferings of the 50 million refugees in China as we are of these of the Jews of Central Europe, or that the death or mutilation of tens of thousands of Chinese women and children at the hands of the Japanese moves the Americans as deeply as the sufferings of Czechs or Spaniards move us; but it is at least certain that Americans are far less inclined to ignore China's agony than we are. Americans have been made far more aware than we have of what is going on in China. There has been no soft pedalling, or ignoring, by the American press, of the terrible massacres which the Japanese perpetrated at Nanking and many other places. Whereas hardly a single English newspaper has a



correspondent in China outside Shanghai, Hong Kong, or Peiping, every important American newspaper has at least one correspondent in the Chinese capital at Chungking or visiting the war zones. Reports of the massacres, the looting, the raping, the continual air raids, are published day after day in the American press. The Churches, whose influence in the United States is very great, and whose congregations have been well informed of what is going on in China through the reports of the many American missionaries there, demanded last June, in a petition signed by more than 60 prominent preachers, that the Administration take action to embargo war materials to Japan.

*The American Committee for Non-Participation in Japanese Aggression*, of which Mr. Stimson is Chairman, has been steadily bringing home to more and more Americans how large a responsibility is borne by the United States for the continuance of Japan's war on China. By meetings, pamphlets and the canvassing of Congressmen it has been spreading the knowledge that the United States is supplying Japan with 56 per cent. of her imported war materials, the figure for the British Empire being about 21 per cent.

The report of the Gallup Survey published in July showed 51 per cent. of the American people in favour of stopping all shipments of war supplies to Japan, and only 25 per cent. as not wishing to do anything to stop Japan. The approval of the President's action voiced by the whole American press, and the fact that it was the leading Presidential Candidate of the Republican Party who first proposed denouncing the Commercial Treaty with Japan, show that this is a measure upon which Americans of all parties can agree.

It is no longer possible for the British Government to argue that, since there is no prospect of American co-operation in exerting economic pressure on Japan, there is no alternative to capitulation to Japan's demands. President Roosevelt's action puts the underlying aims of British policy to the test. Is our recent undertaking not to "obstruct" the Japanese forces in China in any measures for their security which they are "obliged" to take, due to our helplessness and our fears, or to an unavowed, and perhaps unconscious, sympathy for the "gentlemanly samurai"?



If we refuse the chance which Roosevelt is giving us to lay the foundations for Anglo-American co-operation on a world scale, when danger threatens us nearer home we may find that the United States has retired finally into isolation. If we refuse to stand with the United States on an issue in which Americans feel their interests and their principles are all involved, how can we expect their support on some future issue which concerns them less? If we make it too obvious that we are only concerned with aggression, when there appears to be no hope of coming to terms which would safeguard our narrowest interests, the isolationists and those who maintain that Britain is always trying to get Americans to "pull her chestnuts out of the fire" will gain the ascendancy in the direction of American foreign policy.

The British Government still thinks only in terms of armies and battleships, and no doubt, if we were not menaced in Europe, we should already have sent warships to the Far East to defend British interests and prestige in the Nineteenth century fashion. To cut down the profits of our "merchants of death", or to jeopardize the safety of British banks, factories, and other investments in China, are acts which apparently no British government can contemplate. It is not the safety of the isolated Britons in China which is really worrying Mr. Chamberlain—their safety is gravely menaced by our refusal to exert pressure on Japan—but the safety of the material wealth of British investors which it is feared Japan might destroy. If it were not for this we should obviously, instead of capitulating to Japan, withdraw our nationals from China as a preliminary to giving substantial aid to China and severing our trade relations with Japan.

If Japan were, like Germany, a country with a mighty heavy industry capable of waging war for a long time on its own resources; if again Japan, like Germany and Italy, exported to many countries instead of in the main to British and American markets, then it would probably be true to say that "economic sanctions mean war". But Japan is a country with little coal, less iron; and only a small production of steel, machinery, automobiles and aeroplanes. She must import, not only oil, but also ores, scrap iron, steel, non-ferrous metals, machinery, automobiles and other "implements of war" in large quantities



if she is to continue waging war on China. Without her present overwhelming superiority in armaments the Chinese would be able to drive her armies out of China. Most important of all is the fact that 40 per cent. of Japan's exports outside the "yen bloc" go to the British Empire and 30 per cent. to the United States. The Dutch East Indies are Japan's next most important market. Germany and Italy together take only 2.6 per cent. of her exports.\* Since Japanese exports consist in the main of raw silk, textiles and other manufactures, it is obvious that her Fascist allies in Europe cannot supply an alternative market. If the Western democracies refused to buy from Japan she could not get the cash to purchase war materials from anyone. No one imagines that Germany and Italy, themselves desperately short of foreign exchange, and with their metals needed for their own armaments, can supply Japan on credit or in any way finance her. Nor should it be forgotten that Japan's trade with all her markets is financed through the City of London. Even the barter trade between Manchukuo and Germany is financed in the London Bill market. Japan's financial position is now so desperate that even a few months credit is of importance to her.

Our conciliatory attitude to Japan is no doubt largely due to a mistaken belief that only by giving way to her and betraying China, can we stop her concluding a military alliance with Germany and Japan which would bring her in on their side in a future European war. If this is our aim in capitulating to Japan, are we not in fact likely to bring about just the opposite result? Japan dare not openly join up with Germany and Italy so long as her armies are bogged in China; she must win her war against China before she can tackle bigger game. If she can induce us by threats to "co-operate" with her, the heart will perhaps be taken out of Chinese resistance and the "China incident" closed. If the war comes to an end with the capitulation of a China deprived of all hope by our action, the extremist army leaders will be in a position to conclude the military alliance with Germany and Italy which they have long been clamouring for, but which no Japanese Government dare

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\*If the trade of the Japanese Empire is considered the German and Italian percentage share of Japanese exports is somewhat larger.



conclude until Chinese resistance has been broken down. In that event the world war, which many people in all parties in this country think can be avoided by a firm stand in Europe and retreat in the Far East, may soon be upon us. It is more than probable that the main reason why Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini have so far held their hand in Europe this summer is China's continuing and effective resistance. Unless the U.S.S.R. can be immobilized by a threat to her Eastern as well as her Western frontier, they will not launch their war on us. Alternatively, unless Japan is in a position to fight as well as to threaten the U.S.S.R. there will be no German aggression in Eastern Europe. So long as Japan is forced to maintain a million troops in China south of the Wall she can render no effective aid to her European allies.

Nor should it be forgotten that the present rulers of Japan cannot contemplate a peace which would mean the return to Japan of her indisciplined and war demoralized troops. The deep-seated maladjustments in Japan's economic and social structure demand a policy of permanent aggression, since only thus can the mirage of prosperity through conquest be held up before the eyes of her peasants, so severely burdened by the exactions of landowners, usurers, monopoly business houses and tax-collectors. A Japanese hegemony over China would not lessen these burdens, and a new war would be necessary to prevent an agrarian revolution, or the reforms which the military landowning class is determined to avoid.

We are perhaps a little too complacent in assuming that the Chinese will continue to fight our battle for us, even if we withdraw the meagre support we have so far given to her. If Japan is confident that she can drive the Western nations out of China, and lay her hands upon the rich prizes in British and French hands in the Far East, she may, conceivably, offer terms to China which the latter would consider preferable to continuing the unequal struggle against a Japan the operations of whose armies Britain has promised "in no way to obstruct".

Japan's blockade of Tientsin has been accompanied by a virtual halt in her military operations against the Chinese armies. If we are so weak as to give way to her as a result of her assaults on our nationals and our rights, she may change the line of her



attack. Her old slogan "Asia for the Asiatics", which could never sound like anything but a hollow mockery so long as she directed her efforts to the killing and enslavement of the Chinese, might meet with a response in Asia if her army and navy directed their guns against us, and abandoned the aim of exploiting the Chinese for that of seizing, in alliance with Germany and Italy, the stored up wealth and the territorial possessions of the British and French Empires.

Moreover, if the Pact with the U.S.S.R. is really of such vital importance to us as many people think, we are far more likely to get the Russians to sign it if we make it cover Eastern as well as Western aggression. As Mr. E. H. Carr has pointed out in *The Spectator*, Russia has already obtained what she wants in Europe—a guarantee by Britain of Poland and Roumania—without the need to give a *quid pro quo*. But with fighting already in progress between Soviet and Japanese forces in Mongolia, an offer to stand against aggression in the Far East as well as in Europe would be likely to secure Russian as well as American support for our world policy.

The securing of America's moral, political and economic support is, however, of far greater importance to this country than Russia's doubtful aid, and the road to Anglo-American co-operation is still open. Nothing vital has yet been surrendered to Japan by the British government, although much damage has been done to the Chinese dollar and to Chinese confidence. We have, without any legal justification, agreed to surrender to Japan the four Chinese whom she accuses of having murdered one of her puppet officials, but whom the Japanese, waging war without declaration of war, have no more right to judge than bandits or pirates. But we have not, at the time of writing, agreed to surrender to Japan the Chinese silver held in Tientsin for the Chinese Government, nor have we as yet given way on the currency question.

Paradoxical as it may sound, the Japanese extremists may, perhaps, save both China and the British Empire. For by insisting on a complete and immediate British capitulation they may yet force the British Government to take a firm stand with America against Japan. The Japanese "moderates" would, by pressing their demands more gradually and more



politely, have achieved all that the extremists desire : a betrayal of China by Britain and a little later the ousting of Britain from China. They would have prevented Anglo-American co-operation by dangling before the eyes of our Simons, Hoares and Halifaxes the prospect of a resurrection of the corpse of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, the "return of Japan to the friendly fold of the democracies", and the continuance of British Imperialist privileges and rights in China.

The extremists, by making the aims of Japan a little too obvious, may yet bring Britain to co-operate with the United States in exerting economic pressure on Japan. Thus will they give the victory to China, and lay the foundations for Anglo-American co-operation on a world scale.



## SWASTIKA OVER HUNGARY

BY GODFREY LIAS

THE shadow of the swastika lies very heavy on Hungary in these post-Munich days. It has been there for quite a number of years, but since last March, when Hitler's legions drove their triumphant motor-cars into Prague, what used to be a distant spectre has become an ever-present menace. Only now, when it is too late, are Hungarians beginning to wake to the fact that the Czechs, whom they despised so heartily, were, in reality, Hungary's first line of defence against the threat of being over-run by Germany.

Because Hungary, for her own ends, welcomed the re-birth of Germany as a Great Power and profited territorially by the discomfiture of the Czechs, it has been widely assumed that Hungary is pro-German—that she is, in fact, anxious to help Germany if there is a war; that her sympathies are on the side of the Rome-Berlin Axis; and that Hungary may therefore be written off as something worse than a bad debt in the present “white war” between the Axis and the British Peace Front.

During two visits to Hungary this summer, I talked to a good many Hungarians in a good many different walks of life and I came to the conclusion that this estimate of the Hungarian attitude is very wide of the mark. In particular, it fails to take account of the fact that the one country with which Hungary has a record of unbroken friendship is Poland; that most of the wars the Hungarians have fought in the 1,000 years or so since they settled in Central Europe have been against some branch or other of the Germanic family; that the Magyars are perhaps more race-proud even than the Germans, so that, while ready to work with Germany as equals, they are not at all anxious to fill a subordinate rôle. And it is a subordinate rôle apparently for which Berlin has cast Hungary, in spite of the superabundance of bunting displayed when prominent Hungarians visit the German capital.



What, precisely, this *rôle* is (besides subordinate), has not yet been clearly disclosed, but there are a few fairly definite pointers which help one to draw some conclusions. It is necessary at the outset to distinguish between the office assigned to Hungary in time of peace and the one Germany hopes to make her adopt in time of war. It is also important to realize that in certain circumstances Hungary might be quite unwilling to play the part allotted to her. She might even flatly refuse to do so, both in peace and war.

In time of peace, Germany, besides being far and away Hungary's best customer, is much too large and much too near for any Hungarian Government lightly to risk a quarrel with her. Moreover, Germany and Hungary are both Have-nots so that in so far as their respective claims do not conflict, it is natural that they should join together to pursue them. This they have done in the recent past and may be expected to continue doing in the future, though it is quite certain that no Hungarian statesman fails to realize that a small country courts grave danger if it decides to hunt side by side with a big imperialist one.

Hunting side by side in peace-time, however, is one thing and hunting together in war-time another. In peace-time, you can drop out of the chase or go through the gate leaving your companion to take his fences alone. In war-time, the hunters are both, so to speak, mounted on the same horse. They must jump together, whether they like it or not. So in the event of war, Germany must first decide whether Hungary as a co-belligerent would be a help or a hindrance.

Similarly Hungary has to make up her mind not only where her inclinations lie but whether she can afford to follow them, and above all she must calculate carefully which side is likely to win in the end. It is by no means certain that the two countries would work out their equations to the same answer.

German policy towards Hungary during the past few months has been directed toward securing as complacent a government as possible. To this end, Berlin has been taking an altogether undue interest in Hungary's internal affairs. Here is a typical example. Just before my first visit to Hungary this summer, I bought some pengöes in London to finance my trip. The rate



my bank quoted was 50 to the pound sterling. A fortnight later, I thought of buying some more, but the rate had suddenly dropped to 28, so I waited. Three weeks afterwards I was able to buy at 38 to the £, since when the external value of the pengö has still further depreciated.

The explanation of these sudden fluctuations was that Hungary had a general election last May and just before the election "somebody" bought up all the available pengö notes outside Hungary in order to finance his political friends inside Hungary. That this was so, is indicated by the fact that the sudden demand for pengöes ceased as soon as the election was over. There is abundant evidence that the "somebody" who was buying pengöes was the German Propaganda Ministry and that the pengöes "he" bought were used to finance the electoral campaign of the Hungarian Nazis, who partly because of the help they received from outside and partly because of conditions inside Hungary, made rather spectacular gains when the election was held.

Needless to say, this German interest in Hungary's internal affairs is by no means appreciated. Even the Hungarian Nazis hotly deny they are pro-German—how hotly I can myself testify, after listening to a young Nazi architect for an hour, as we sat sipping our coffee on that famous Duna Prospect, whither all Budapest gravitates daily, as faithfully as London does to Hyde Park on a Sunday. To him, it was not the Hungarian Nazis who were pro-German. It was the Hungarian Government, one of whose sins, in his eyes, was that it co-operated too closely with the German minority. Needless to say the Hungarian Government holds precisely the opposite opinion.

Even if there were no other evidence available—and there is plenty—the fact that it is not a political asset to wear the label "pro-German" is of itself a sufficient reason for assuming that Germany is not popular in Hungary. Most people are suspicious of Germany's motives in seeking Hungarian co-operation. It is noticed, for example, that Germany has never come out wholeheartedly in support of Hungary's claims to Transylvania. Hungarian statesmen are shrewd enough to realize that the friendship, or at any rate, the benevolent neutrality of Roumania would be worth much more to Germany in a war than anything

little Hungary could offer. Roumania has oil and wheat and important mineral deposits which Germany is very anxious to exploit, and if possible to control. Hungary's natural resources are, by comparison, insignificant. Germany, in short, is only going to espouse Hungary's cause whole-heartedly if Roumania cannot be frightened into the German camp, or (if that is not possible) at least out of the camp of Germany's opponents. Consequently the breath of German protestations of friendship blows sometimes hot and sometimes cold in Budapest's direction according as there is an anti-cyclone or depression in German-Roumanian relations.

Obviously, however, this is not the whole story. Hungary like Germany, is a land with several grievances arising, like Germany's, out of the peace settlement. Just so far as co-operation with Germany seems likely to improve Hungary's chances of remedying these grievances, the Hungarian Government is naturally going to co-operate. But its co-operative sentiments very definitely stop short of war, and this for three reasons : first, that Hungary is by no means sure that Germany would win ; secondly, that to fight for Germany would be to fight against Poland which, in the words of a prominent Hungarian statesman " would be almost like fighting against one's own mother " ; and lastly because there are few Hungarians who do not realize what would happen to Hungary if Germany were victorious.

It is possible, of course, that if there were a war, Hungary would be forced to " co-operate " with Germany whether she liked it or no. In war time, Germany has several courses open to her : to let Hungary stay neutral, to invite her to allow German troops to pass through Hungarian territory in order to coerce Roumania and to invite or force Hungary to fight on the German side. The preponderant opinion in Budapest is that if Germany can draw sufficient raw materials from the Balkan and Danubian countries, particularly Roumania, without having to go in and take them, she will allow all these countries, Hungary included, to remain neutral. While in Sofia, shortly after my first visit to Budapest, I found first-hand evidence that this is actually the policy Germany would like to follow. It is generally recognized, however, that things might not work out



just as Hitler might wish and in this case Hungary would almost certainly have to choose between permitting a German occupation of Hungary, joining in the war as Germany's ally and—taking up arms to resist German penetration.

This third possibility, however ridiculous it may sound, cannot be altogether ruled out. There are many Hungarians who would rather die than submit to a German occupation (it is betraying no secret to say that Admiral Horthy is generally believed to be one of them), even if the chief motive of that occupation were to give Germany a base from which to attack Hungary's ancient enemy, Roumania. Where Hungarian sympathies lie can be judged from the fact that quite a number of young Hungarians have gone to enlist in the Polish army.

Even a mere request by Germany to allow her troops to pass through Hungary en route to attack somebody else would be highly unpopular with the majority of politically-minded Hungarians owing to the doubts they feel whether the Germans would ever go out again once they got in. That this is so can be seen from the distinctly cool reception given in Budapest to recent reports that Germany would allow Hungary to annex Slovakia in return either for a full military alliance or the right to send troops through Hungary at will. If Hungary saw the slightest chance of getting away with it, she would refuse such a request. She would also refuse it if she had come to the conclusion that the war would end in a German defeat.

The ancient friendship between Hungary and Poland as well as the fear of Germany's motives both play a part in making Hungarians dubious about an alliance with Germany even if this is only meant as a move in the diplo-military game by which Hitler hopes to obtain control of Eastern Europe without a war. But there is another reason for their hesitation. It is true that co-operation with Germany during the past year has yielded certain fruit but it is fruit which is proving unexpectedly hard to digest. The Hungarian minority in Slovakia which was transferred back to the motherland by grace of Germany and Italy under the Vienna award last year is thoroughly discontented. Nor are the Ruthenians (whom it is worth noting that the Hungarians annexed without first asking Hitler's permission) by any means satisfied with their new status as

self-governing subjects of Hungary. Add to these discontents the serious internal difficulties facing the Hungarian Government in regard to land reform and the standard of living and it will be understood why so many Hungarians, to-day, feel it would be unwise, in the extreme, to embark on a policy of adventure, with a view to swallowing still further slices of indigestible territory.

In these circumstances, Hungarian policy has lately turned toward the possibility of cultivating better relations with neighbouring States, all the more so, as for the moment and in peace time, Hungarian interests appear to march with those of Germany. While Hitler is concentrating all his attention on Poland and Danzig, he naturally does not wish to enlarge the circle of his enemies by pushing any of the countries of south-eastern Europe into the arms of the British Peace Front. He would, as we have seen, prefer a neutral Balkans, partly because he would like to draw supplies from each of the Balkan States, and partly because, if he were to force one group into the Axis, another and larger group would tend to gravitate in the opposite direction. But as he is by no means certain that all the Balkan States *will* stay neutral, he is also playing with the idea of promoting a close understanding between Hungary, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. It is very doubtful whether Hitler could ever bring these three countries together in opposition to Roumania, Greece and Turkey, but meanwhile it happens that a Hungary temporarily minus territorial ambitions is equally anxious to find friends to the south and east—though not necessarily for the same reason. The more friends Hungary has the less she need fear Germany. It is not generally known that Hungary recently offered to sign a non-aggression treaty with Roumania on the sole condition that the Hungarian minority in Transylvania should be granted new privileges. If Roumania had accepted, both Hungary and Hitler would no doubt have been delighted, though possibly again for different reasons. Hitler, of course, would have hoped that ultimately the effect of the arrangement would have been to bring Roumania as well as Hungary, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria more closely within the German orbit. But it is conceivable that Hungary might have used such an arrangement to present a somewhat more independent front to Germany.



Thus, all the time there are wheels within wheels in the drama that is being played in Central and South-East Europe. Meanwhile, it should not be forgotten that if Germany to-day has imperial aspirations in this part of the world, Hungary has an imperial past which relates to much the same regions. If Hitler, for example, makes no secret of the fact that he considers himself heir to the Habsburg Empire, Hungary equally remembers that many of the provinces of that Empire used to be her own possessions. She has especially close associations with Dalmatia, a district in which incidentally Signor Mussolini is also deeply interested. Many prominent people in Budapest believe it to be inevitable that one day Yugoslavia will break up because of Serb-Croat rivalry. If it broke up to-day, the beneficiaries would probably be the Germans, or possibly the Italians, certainly not the Hungarians. But if to-morrow, who knows? Be that as it may, if to-morrow the swastika should no longer be casting its ominous shadow over Hungary, there is scarcely a Hungarian who would not hail its disappearance with profound relief.

## AIR DEFENCE AND ATTACK

BY GROUP-CAPTAIN L. L. MACLEAN

WHAT is the significance of Air Power? It permits of absolute surprise. It permits of the attack being delivered at that exact moment most favourable to the attacker and most disastrous to the victim, and the general plan of campaign need not necessarily be influenced by the success or failure of the blows in the first phase. It may be that the aim of the first attack will be to accomplish a knock-out. That this may not be achieved does not mean that the gamble has failed and that all is lost. If the first blow fails, the aggressor is not committed irrevocably to his original plan. The flexibility of his instrument and the elasticity of his medium allow him to redirect his strokes against targets less important perhaps, but, ultimately, none the less vital.

If a surprise attack were made on London, for instance, it is likely that the first blow, struck suddenly and without warning, would reach its objective without opposition. Falling as a bolt from the blue, it might find London teeming with jostling crowds on normal business or pleasure bent, quite unconscious of any danger. Stricken thus, the death roll would be tremendous but subsequent attacks on London would be met and the issue fought out, with perhaps such losses to the enemy as would compel him to draw off.

But there would still be nothing to prevent the enemy from directing his subsequent efforts against the ports of the country, exposed on our coasts and difficult to defend. If he could shatter the storage and distributive organization and prevent the ingress and egress of ships, he would, in fact, establish a condition of blockade and food shortage which must in time sap the morale of the whole populace.

Nearly eighty-five per cent. of the country's population depends for very life on imported ship-borne food. The



industrial activity of the country continues only because essential raw materials, including the ores for our steel industry, can be transported in a similar way and to a similar extent. Moreover the very waging of war would only be possible if an uninterrupted flow of oil continued to pass through those ports equipped to receive it. In fact the whole resources of the country are represented by its ships, and the primary economic centres are in consequence the ports and not the inland manufacturing centres. It is against these resources and economic centres that air attack would achieve its greatest effect and with the least loss to the attackers.

The destruction of shipping by a comparatively small number of submarines during the last war, reduced us to the verge of starvation in 1917. To-day Germany possesses a greater number of submarines than in 1917 and the added possession of aircraft, whose cruising range is of the order of 3,000 miles, has infinitely extended the scope and possibilities of this form of warfare.

Except in co-operation with submarines, however, the use of aircraft in large numbers for independent action against shipping is unlikely, because it would involve considerable dispersion of effort, much of which would inevitably be wasted in searching the oceans to find targets, and Germany, pressed for fuel, is unlikely to waste an ounce of it in unproductive work, especially as the same ships could be destroyed with far less expenditure of effort and with more certainty of success by direct attacks on those comparatively few ports, which must inevitably harbour them.

In order to attack such ports as Aberdeen, Dundee, Leith, Newcastle, Hull and other large towns on the East Coast, enemy raiders travelling at 300 miles an hour and attacking from a height of fifteen to twenty thousand feet, could release their bombs on to their coastal targets from a distance of three miles out to sea, while their aeroplanes would barely brush the fringe of the defence system.

They could practise a similar form of attack on the West against such ports as Swansea, Liverpool, Belfast and Barrow, providing they could operate from Spanish bases.

It may be argued that bombing in these circumstances would make no pretence at accuracy, but what has to be realized is that

accuracy would not be attempted. The objective for attack would be the docks and the adjacent area, and methods suitable for area bombing would be employed. That is bombing would be carried out by a number of aircraft flying in formation, each aeroplane laying a row of bombs at evenly spaced intervals.

Three bombers, each carrying one ton in the form of eight 250lb. bombs, flying at 300 miles an hour in line abreast at 200 yards apart and each releasing one bomb a second by time release gear, would create a stricken area 1,100 yards long by 450 yards broad, or 102 acres. If the blasting zone of each bomb is taken at the conservative figure of fifty yards, it is not an unreasonable assumption that very little will be left intact within the pattern created by three such rows of bombs, each row 200 yards apart and each row containing eight bombs 150 yards apart.

On this basis it would require some 400 aeroplanes completely to cover Hull, 300 for Newcastle and 120 for the Port of London dock area. In attempting to estimate the amount of damage that bombs would do, it may be possible to get some guidance from the last war.

In the twelve months, May, 1917 to May, 1918, German aeroplanes dropped about 900 bombs in London of which about 350 were incendiary. Two hundred and twenty-five fires were started. Seven hundred and ninety-three houses were destroyed or seriously damaged, and the total casualties in London were 2,900 injured and killed. Nearly half the bombs, representing the load of two hundred and thirty aeroplanes fell into an area of approximately one thousand two hundred and eighty acres in the Cheapside, Shoreditch district. Two hundred and thirty modern bombers, each carrying one ton of bombs and using automatic distribution, to ensure that their bombs fell at exactly spaced intervals, could destroy a built-up area of about 7,800 acres. The German striking force, to-day, probably exceeds ten times that number of aircraft. Its potential for damage is therefore easily calculable.

There can then be no illusion about the extreme necessity of preventing bombing aircraft reaching our vital ports. Prevention or the deflection of raids can only be achieved if the raiding bombers are struck before they reach our shores, whereas



the mere infliction of casualties may be attempted after the enemy is over our territory. It seems obvious that we cannot prevent raids which are coming in at a speed perhaps in excess of five miles a minute from reaching their objectives, if we only attempt interception in the vicinity of the targets.

In the first place the raiders have got to be found, they may be anywhere from twenty to twenty thousand feet, and unless the fighter is in approximately the same strata of air as the bomber he will never catch sight of it. Once found the raiders can be attacked. It would be absurd, however, to assume that the climbing fighters will invariably have picked a line which would bring them on to the most advantageous position to begin an attack straight away, or that the first attack will invariably be successful. If it fails, manœuvre for fresh position will ensue, requiring both time and space. Climb, search, pursuit and attack may well absorb some thirty minutes, during which the raiding aircraft may have travelled 150 miles. The necessity for meeting the incoming raider at least 150 miles out, if our ports and coastal towns are to be protected, is clear. Yet the defence system lacking a long distance fighter, and depending entirely on the Spitfire and Hurricane interceptor types, can not carry out this essential function of defence.

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What of our offensive power? In retaliatory bombing attacks we shall obviously have to strive to inflict on the enemy an ordeal not less severe than that to which he may be able to subject us. It will not be sufficient to limit our attacks to objectives on the periphery of Germany such as Bremen, Hamburg, Cologne and so on. We shall have to strike deep, it may be at the sources of his steel and iron production, his chemical factories, his aircraft industry or possibly at his seat of government.

It will not be sufficient to confine attacks on the enemy's industry to those centres which are accessible in the Ruhr. In order to make such a campaign effective, we shall also have to strike at the complementary industrial areas in the South and East of Germany. If Germany strikes at London, we, most emphatically, must counter on Berlin.

How then do we stand in relation to Germany as regards bombing attacks?

The distances from bases in North-West Germany, to such places as London, Hull and Newcastle vary between 350 and 400 miles, including in the case of London, a distance of perhaps 50 miles during which raiding squadrons would be exposed to attack by fighters and by anti-aircraft guns. Whereas the shortest route from our Eastern bases in this country to, say, Berlin is 570 miles of which 250 miles would have to be flown over enemy territory in the teeth of opposition.

While over enemy territory, pilots encountering anti-aircraft fire will fly in zig-zags and at irregularly varying speeds, both of which will contribute to heavily increased fuel consumption and reduced ground distances actually covered. When engaged by fighters they will fly at top speeds, when fuel consumption will be nearly three times that of cruising speed.

The figures to illustrate the extent to which our bombers must be superior to those of Germany, to bring us on to terms or relative equality as regards the power to strike, say, at Berlin and at London respectively can be obtained as follows :—250 miles from the coast to Berlin and back is 500 miles in a zone subject to attack and therefore flown on a zig-zag course and at high speed. This represents in terms of petrol at cruising speed a range of 1,750 miles. Add to this the 700 miles for the double North Sea crossing at cruising speed, and we have a minimum range requirement of 2,450 miles.

The corresponding figures for a German aircraft attacking London would be :—700 miles for the double North Sea crossing at cruising revolutions, plus 100 miles from coast to objective and back, flown at full speed and on an irregular course representing 350 miles in petrol, at cruising rates of consumption. This shows the German requirement to be an aircraft with a cruising range of under 1,100 miles.

It is thus apparent that though the medium bomber of 1,200 mile range will put Germany in a position to attack our vital centres, we shall require a machine of at least 2,500 miles range to attack only as deep into Germany as Berlin, and over 3,000 miles if we are to be able to reach really important industrial areas on the far side of Germany. While the German can do with



a comparatively small aeroplane, our standard equipment must be the big aeroplane.

The present situation is, however, that the greater part of the striking force of this country is composed of medium bombers with a range too short to allow them to operate from bases in this country. As a result they must either be based on aerodromes in France or they must operate from home bases and refuel at aerodromes in France, with all the consequent handicaps and inefficiencies that such a procedure will entail.

The public is persistently deluded by propaganda about our aircraft and their capacity for long distance flights. For long distance record breaking flights additional petrol tanks are fitted in place of the normal load of bombs, guns, ammunition and so on and the aeroplane is overloaded to an extent that would not be permissible in any conditions of ordinary use. For instance, the Wellesleys, which flew non-stop to Australia were designed originally to be worked at a certain load per square foot of wing surface. The load of fuel under which they took off at the commencement of that flight must have imposed a wing loading nearly twice that of the normal.

The whole circumstances of flight in such conditions are abnormal. The aeroplane is flown at an engine speed calculated to give the most economical fuel consumption, and in consequence the airspeed is absurdly low. The average speed of the flight to Australia worked out at 135 m.p.h. Such a speed bears little relation to the 300 and 320 m.p.h. at which we must expect war flying to be carried out, and few of the lessons learned from flights at that speed are of any value in relation to flights at higher speeds. Such flights, in fact, absorbing a vast amount of specialized energy, time, and personnel, and costing a great deal of money, do nothing to delude the technical experts of foreign countries, and are of little value except for publicity and propaganda in this country.

It is only too apparent that we have not even yet appreciated that our geographical situation imposes upon us, technical requirements peculiar to ourselves. To defend ourselves we must have the large long distance fighter. To fight back we must have the large long range bomber, of equal or superior

performance to the smaller types which will answer Germany's purpose.

The recent flight across America by the Boeing flying fortress, and the demonstrations given by the Seversky long-distance fighter in this country, show that such machines already exist and, presumably, could be purchased to fill existing gaps as an interim measure while those of our own design are coming into being.



## PALESTINE POLICY

BY CAPTAIN VICTOR CAZALET, M.P.

THERE have been two debates on Palestine in the House of Commons during the recent session. Both debates covered a wide range of subjects dealing with the Middle East. The second of the debates was occasioned by the decision of the Colonial Office to suspend all certificates for Jewish immigration into Palestine for the next six months owing to the large number of illegal immigrants which have been recently pouring into the country. On each occasion the Government has had a fairly substantial majority, but not one which any member of the Government could regard as wholly satisfactory. In the first debate there were twenty-one supporters of the Government who voted against it and, in addition, a considerable number who abstained.

How many of those who supported the Government disliked its policy, it is impossible to tell. It is clear, however, that the Government's Palestine proposals are viewed with disfavour, if not active opposition, by, at any rate, a fair number of Government supporters. It is frankly and openly opposed by every member of the Opposition with, perhaps, two or three exceptions.

Personally, I believe for a number of reasons, some of which I shall mention later, that the Government will find itself unable to carry out its policy and will once again have to follow the example of former governments, swallow its pride and revert to an alternative scheme. I fully recognize, although I strongly oppose the Government's present proposals, that the members of the Government who support them are just as concerned as I am for the honour of the British Empire and the peace and prosperity of Palestine. It would appear to me, however, that some of them have allowed certain considerations of present expediency to colour their views. I take the view that the proposals in the White Paper of June of this year

are definitely against our obligations under the Mandate and politically impracticable.

In order to see the picture in its proper perspective one must go back two years to the time when the Report of the Royal Commission came to the conclusion that a scheme of "partition" was the best solution of the problem. In offering their reasons for this decision the Commissioners gave an exhaustive and incomparably the best and fairest history of Palestine and its problems since the War. Never has the Arab case been more adequately set forth. No one, who has not read that report and weighed carefully the arguments which finally persuaded the Commissioners to come to their decision, should be dogmatic about the Palestine problem.

The Royal Commission recognized that certain promises had been made both to the Jews and Arabs. They admitted that the interpretation of these promises was difficult, as some of them had been made many years ago and different impressions had been both given and received by the parties concerned. At all events, the Jewish National Home had already been established to the extent of over 400,000 Jews. The Report also made it perfectly clear that whatever may be the individual qualities of both Jews and Arabs, their two forms of civilization and standards of life were, at the present moment, many hundreds of years apart.

To endeavour to administer under one Government people so different as the Jews and the Arabs was almost an impossible task. It was complicated by the fact that the administration had to take into account the Christian as well as the Jews and Arabs. Three different holidays each week, three languages, three standards of life, all in an area not bigger than Wales, presented almost insuperable problems.

The Royal Commission, therefore, decided that the simplest method was to divide the country primarily into two parts, one Jewish and the other Arab. In these areas, they should create their own governments and eventually be in complete control of everything within their borders. There was to be a third area which included the holy places and which was to remain permanently under British control.

The Government accepted the Report of the Royal Com-



mission in principle. Details as regards boundaries, currency, transport, customs, etc., were to be worked out by a further Commission. The House of Commons decided that the plan should be sent to Geneva for its views before it should be asked to come to a definite decision. The Jews, who at first felt that they were being deprived of a large portion of their legitimate rights in Palestine, finally accepted it by a very considerable majority of the elected members of the National Jewish Congress. The Arabs turned it down.

Later the Government, after what I consider unforgivable prevarication and delay, appointed the Woodhead Commission to inquire into certain details, with terms of reference which made it almost impossible for that Commission to report on certain matters otherwise than against the scheme of partition. As it was, the Woodhead Commission, which consisted of four men, produced three different reports.

Nearly two years after the Report of the Royal Commission, the British Government decided to call a conference of Arabs and Jews in London. After very extended conferences and after an incredible display of patience on the part of the Secretary of State, no agreement was reached. Hence the White Paper of May, 1939, which has been the subject of two recent debates on Palestine in Parliament.

This is the story, briefly told, of the Government's efforts to solve the Palestine problem in the past few years. My own conviction—and I have reason to believe that it is supported by many others—is that if the Government had definitely declared in favour of partition and had been determined to put it into operation, you would have had by now a considerable measure of co-operation between Jew and Arab. Each nation would have been busy building up and creating its own state. Jew and Arab would have been forced to deal with each other and to come to practical conclusions for their mutual benefit, instead of rivalling each other in creating problems for the British administration. I have no hesitation in saying that the authorities whom I saw in Palestine in the beginning of 1938 genuinely thought that some form of partition was the right scheme and that it was practicable. The delay, blunders and

muddle have accounted for many lives and have put back for a long time any equitable solution of the problem.

Perhaps it is only fair for all concerned to state that, the whole problem of Palestine was made infinitely harder by two circumstances neither of which could ever have been foreseen by the Government at the time of the Peace Treaties. First, the rise of Arab nationalism and secondly, the persecution of the Jews in Europe. Each, in its turn, has aggravated the situation in Palestine.

I do not myself see how the Jews can ever accept a definite limitation of the National Home such as that proposed by the Government's present policy. Nor do I think it fair to regard them as unreasonable. After all, what is their case? Two years ago they were offered a Sovereign State in Palestine. They were told that in return for accepting this comparatively small area they would get the prestige of being an individual Sovereign State. This, in itself, was a tremendously important consideration. For the Jews to have had a Sovereign State of their own after centuries of minority existence was no mean compensation for a very considerable curtailment of the Palestine area, which they had originally been offered for their National Home. A Sovereign State, it was argued, gave them certain other great advantages. They would never be subject to the majority Arab rule and in it they would also have complete control of immigration.

Looking back now, one wonders how any Jew could have hesitated for a minute before accepting this offer. After two years of delay they have been offered and, temporarily, at any rate, had imposed upon them, a solution which is the antithesis of the proposals in the Report of the Royal Commission. To my mind it is surprising how controlled and moderate has been the action of the Jews in the last few months.

It is true that a vast amount of illicit immigration has been going on. This, perhaps, is not unnatural when we consider the conditions to which the Jews are being subjected in Europe. In many cases the individuals concerned are blackmailed and bullied into leaving Germany. They are threatened that unless they do so within a given time they, or their relations, will be put into concentration camps. Whatever may be their fate



in Palestine, it must be better than that which awaits them in their own country. There is no doubt that their desire to get to Palestine has been exploited in many cases and their treatment in certain ships has been a scandal of the first order.

It is sometimes suggested that the Jewish authorities are in favour of this illicit immigration. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Jews dislike illicit immigration as much as anybody else. It gives them no control or powers of selection over the individuals who go to Palestine. They are obliged to take anyone who comes and many of them are by no means suitable subjects for building up their new National Home. It is obviously impossible for the Jewish authorities in Palestine not to do everything they can to welcome these refugees and make them contented and happy, once they have arrived.

I, myself, do not see how the Government will ever be able to prevent the continuation of this illicit immigration. It is quite possible to arrest them when they arrive but having arrived, the Government is faced with the alternative of either keeping them in Palestine, or turning them adrift again in the small rowing boats in which they land from the bigger ships in which they have crossed the Mediterranean. No British Government could send these unfortunate people back again to Germany, nor could they send them out into the sea again in boats or ships which are unseaworthy and which would simply mean that the great majority of them would be drowned.

They are, therefore, forced to accept the situation and allow these refugees to land—their only redress being to deduct the numbers of such entrants from the official quota for Jewish immigrants. In the last few weeks owing to the excessive number of illicit immigrants they have closed the quota altogether for six months. I think I understand, and appreciate, the Government's point of view, but I am not at all sure that it is the right way to deal with the situation. They will never be able to stop illicit immigration without the co-operation of the Jews. There will always be people who will prefer the possibility of arrest in Palestine to the certainty of concentration camps in Germany. If the Government deport them to some British camps in Cyprus the Jews would infinitely prefer that to continuing to remain in their own country. Unless the authorities

arrest ships outside the three mile limit they will never be able to prevent vessels remaining just outside territorial waters and then, at night, sending immigrants ashore in small rowing boats or indeed on floats or in some cases actually swimming.

My own suggestions for dealing with the situation comprise two lines of approach—one dealing with policy and the other with the question of immigration. If you want to control immigration, you must get Jewish co-operation. If you want Jewish co-operation, you must revert to some policy more or less along the same lines as that proposed two years ago and accepted by the Jews. I would begin conversations both with Jews and Arabs about some form of federalism or partition. I would offer them both areas in which, from the very beginning, they would have a very large measure of self-government.

As I said at the start of my article, I believe there are many directions in which the Jews and Arabs would have to work together if left to themselves. Take, for instance, the question of marketing the citrus crops. Here it is obviously so much in the interests of Jews and Arabs to work together that it is inconceivable, if left alone, they would not soon get on to a basis of co-operation. There are many other matters both in commerce and administration in which it is in the equal interests of both Jews and Arab to co-operate.

Where immigration is concerned I would give the Jews, first of all, the 10,000 already allotted to them under the White Paper proposals. I would add on the 25,000 extra and divide it equally between the next two years, giving them this year and next an official quota of 22,500. I would, in addition, give them a small quota for people over a certain age who can neither 'work, nor fight, nor breed'. There are numerous cases of Jews in Palestine employed in remunerative jobs who still have aged parents and relatives in Germany. All they ask is that their parents should be allowed to come to Palestine and die. I would suggest 2,500 certificates should be given for the next two years for people of this kind.

Altogether, this would mean that during the next two years the Jews would be able to bring legally 25,000 Jews into Palestine. By the end of that time we should have been able to allot certain areas in which the Jews would have complete control of their



own affairs and retain certain other areas in which no Jew could either settle or buy land except with Arab permission. You would then have the nucleus of two States which, before long, might well form part of a general federation of States linked up with Syria.

I am sure that until you give both Jews and Arabs a large measure of self-government you will never get any degree of co-operation between them. I quite appreciate that this would mean a reversal once again of government policy. Actually, it would only be reverting to their policy of two years ago. If in the immediate future some concrete proposals for Jewish settlement in other parts of the world could be made, no doubt this would have a considerable influence on the situation. So far such offers have been tentative, feeble and inconclusive.

I cannot here go fully into the question of what are or what are not British interests in the Middle East. No doubt in the course of the next year or two many problems will have been solved, both in the Mediterranean and in Europe, which will have a considerable influence upon our policy in Palestine. At the moment it seems to me that the vital point is we should have adequate forces to defend Egypt. As long as there is dissatisfaction in Palestine a large proportion of our forces will have to be kept there. Once you have divided the country into definite Jewish and Arab areas the Jews will, I am convinced, be able to defend themselves and in addition be able to produce a very considerable and highly efficient body of men to serve elsewhere.

I have no doubt that arguments will be produced that any such policy as I have outlined would immediately create more Arab discontent. Personally, I have never believed that either the Arab princes outside Palestine, or the Moderate Arabs in Palestine, would oppose any policy upon which Britain had made up her mind, nor are they averse to accepting what is to-day a *fait accompli*, namely the establishment of a National Jewish Home in some part of Palestine.

I am myself no enemy of the Arabs. Any one who has travelled in the Middle East or India must recognize the importance of good relations between ourselves and every sect of Moslems. I feel, however, that we have never given the

Moderate Arabs a chance of making their influence felt against the efficient and heavily subsidized propaganda of the Extremists. I have never minimized the extent of Arab feeling in Palestine, but I cannot see that we are entitled to allow Arab opposition, however legitimately or strongly felt, to prevent recognition of our definite obligations to the Jews not only in Palestine but throughout the world as well.

Far be it from me to have given the impression that the problem of Palestine is an easy one, or that there is any simple solution. I realize that the present Secretary of State has displayed patience and tact, and a complete disregard of red tape far beyond what might be expected of a man in his position. My contention is that all these points were carefully summed up in the Report of the Royal Commission and I, for one, am prepared to abide by its decision as, I believe, would the bulk of the people in this country if they were conversant with the facts.

Jew and Arab have got to work together in Palestine. As long as we continue to try and run them both, we shall be suspected by both, and we shall be used by each party as the butt of all their complaints and the cause of all their misfortunes. Left alone to bargain their own terms, I believe both Jew and Arab would come to a solution in a surprisingly short time.

The Jews have, in their leader, Dr. Weizmann, a man of infinite patience, wisdom and moderation. Neither the British Government, nor the Arabs, are ever likely to negotiate again, with a representative of the Jewish race, occupying a position of such unrivalled authority among his co-religionists throughout the world, as Dr. Weizmann. There will never be a truer and better friend of Great Britain, nor one more anxious to appreciate and understand the Arab point of view. Is it too much to hope that advantage will be taken by Great Britain and the Arabs of this fact so that all may find, in the near future, a permanent and an honourable solution of the difficulties, which will bring peace and prosperity to Palestine.



## MEXICAN NOCTURNE

BY HECTOR BOLITHO

WE came to Corpus Christi, on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico, in the late afternoon. It was pleasant, after the flowerless earth of Tennessee and Northern Texas to come upon stretches of grass. I saw a golfer making a mashie shot into a big, vicious clump of cactus. There were shrubs of gay blossom, placid water with little boats, and children, trailing their hands to keep them cool. Birds were flying home across the bay; they flew low and slowly, as if the day had been heavy with good food and heat.

When it was dark, we came to Edinburg, set at one end of the Rio Grande valley. Here is rich land, succouring orange trees, grape-fruit, lofty palms, hibiscus, bougainvillea and irises. The air was warm and one sensed the laziness of the tropics. But we were still in the United States of America. It was the hotel manager who said, "Let's run over into Mexico and have a drink". But could we go? "Is there a way into Mexico?" I asked. I was helped into a car, and we tore out of the little American town, between lines of immense palm trees, across the Rio Grande river, deep and dark below us. I waved my passport to an official who brushed flies away from his lazy eyes, and then we climbed a dusty road into Mexico. We chose one of a cluster of dark buildings, opened a squeaky door and found ourselves in a musty bar-room. We joined a mixed gay company, and among them was one who became my friend. Let him be Richard for the sake of the story.

Americans laugh outright over some quip that tickles their sense of humour, but they seldom smile. Richard smiled with every square inch of his face. He was in his late twenties, already deep-rooted in the oil business. He wore a big Texas hat. After a little time, we all walked out into the darkness again. There was a low, lapis lazuli sky, peppered with stars. I murmured, "Mexico. It is hardly true".

It was then that Richard said, "Monterrey is only a hundred miles away. We could go there if you like".

We left in the crisp, cool morning. I drank my coffee at the open window of my bedroom. It was so dark that the motor-cars had their headlights on: so silent that I could hear the dew dripping from the breadfruit, on to the lower leaves. We dressed quickly and drove down the avenue of palms: past the white houses that were barely awake, over the rattling wooden bridge which spans the Rio Grande, and into a new country.

My brown shoes shone like a good meerschaum pipe. We all have some foible or other and I hate to enter a new country with dirty shoes. I remember crossing from Gibraltar into Spain one day and holding up the cavalcade while a little squib of a Spaniard polished my shoes. (I remember, too, that I paid him with a coin which showed the face of King Alfonso as a boy; a Greuze face, worn and scratched by much barter and exchange.)

My shoes were clean as I crossed the Rio Grande, to make my conquest of Mexico. How many accidents contribute to the pleasure of a journey! One must feel fresh, and the day must be good. One's companion must be able to talk and listen with equal sensitiveness. And the journey must not be hampered by time or any rigid purpose. In such circumstances almost any fresh landscape is exciting. When the talk is easy and the pace of travel not disturbing, the bushes and the trees, the cattle and the little houses take on unusual grace. One's mind is sharpened and one's eyes are wide awake, to take in every eccentricity of vegetation and every sign of human life: the dusty oleanders, the silver hat of a little Mexican boy playing in the velvety dust, the clumps of blazing cannas, the docile oxen with their slow motion ambling towards the water troughs, and, in one place, sparkling music that came to us through a screen of trees.

Sometimes, a little way back from the straight, dusty road, vultures would wheel in the air and then swoop down to satisfy their filthy appetites upon some dead thing in the bushes.

We came to the Don Juan river, ninety-seven miles from the Rio Grande. It was deep cut into the parched land and the ferrymen moved their hips lazily and their ancient boat glided

as if it were a spirit boat, waiting to bear us into another world. The sun was magnificent. It rode imperially in the sky, scorching all the world about us and making our minds drowsy. When we had crossed the Don Juan, we moved into different country. There were more signs of life ; ramshackle houses in plantations, baked and still, and howling dogs, and, a little later, a red cart with yellow wheels. Sometimes a few poinsettias grew beside the wall of a house, but they looked as if they flourished by chance rather than design.

As we drove on, we allowed our minds to play with an idea : that human beings belong, irrevocably, to the earth from which they spring : that they grow from it as naturally as trees and that just as the stern pine grows in Scandinavia and the graceful palm upon the shores of the Mediterranean, so do Nordic men grow rightly in the north and Latins languish in the south and neither the fanaticism of reformers nor the interference of legislators can change their character. Thus the zones into which the human race must be classified and understood spread in bands *about* the earth, from east to west, and never from north to south. I think one may search back into history and prove that this is true. With all the blood and iron policy of Bismarck, he never taught the Bavarian to comprehend the Prussian. Nor can one believe that in the great spaces of time Herr Hitler's crazy dreams can come true. The Berlin-Rome axis is against nature. Who could reconcile the gimcrack creation of Berlin and its strutting parakeets with the ancient beauty and repose of Rome ! And I doubt if Signor Mussolini supposes that he can snatch the guitars away from the Italians and deny them their siestas, for ever.

I said to Richard, " One of the blessings with which we may console ourselves is that reformers are usually ignorant men ". He answered, " Yes, they have as much history as you could balance upon a dime ". Their own violent self-assurance prevents them from taking human nature into consideration in planning their dizzy schemes for change. Perhaps it is because they are so blind to the subtleties of human nature that most reformers and dictators are boring figures in history. It is significant that you will often find flowers about the pedestal



of Charles the First's statue in London, but never a blossom at the feet of Cromwell.

Soon after we had crossed the Don Juan river we saw mountains on the sky line. They rose suddenly from the desert and as we came nearer, they revealed cultivated green valleys which hinted that there might be a city on the other side. Houses appeared, some with bee hives in their gardens. There was an advertisement for Palm Olive soap and another for *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. We turned into a valley and found Monterrey spreading before us. The city was not beautiful, but neither was it as ugly as other industrial towns seem to be. We found a hotel in which the clock had stopped and we found a book shop in which they sold Jules Verne, Fennimore Cooper, Maryat, Homer, Virgil, and Plato.

We had only one evening in Monterrey. Richard was obliged to return for his work next day, and I was pledged to spend Christmas in California. So we chose our adventures carefully. The first was unexpected. I wished to know if the Emperor Maximilian had even been to Monterrey and I asked the barman if he could tell me. "I just can't say. There's a fountain up there, in the Plaza Purisimo that he gave to the town. But there is an American woman here, married to a Mexican, and she knows more about it than anybody else". He even telephoned her for me and, within a minute, I was listening to a soft, pleasant voice, not merely telling me of Maximilian, but asking Richard and myself to dine.

We found our way to a quiet street with placid houses, built level with the pavement. The moment the door opened and we were in a cool, dimly lighted hall, we felt that we were in a happy house. Fresh assurances were pressed upon us as we found a high, quiet sitting-room, a children's play pen in the patio, and a serene American woman who moved with all the confidence of somebody who is intelligent and contented. We had been asked to eat tamales. The sight of a kind old servant and the pungent, sweet smells of food excited us.

This is how tamales are made. You "take" four pounds of dried corn, as they say in the cookery books. This must be soaked all night in a tin of lime water and next day it should be

ground coarsely to make the *masa*. Now you turn your back upon the corn and spend your next efforts upon some boiled meat from a pig's head. This is shredded and mixed with the following seasoning : Take a pound of dry red Mexican peppers (chiles) and fry them in hot lard. Drain them and plunge them into boiling water. Then grind or scrape them to loosen the soft pulp and discard the skins. Fry this pulp with garlic comino, salt, a bit of sage and marjoram and lard. The corn masa should be beaten with the gelatinous pork broth until it is spongy and light and mixed with a small part of the sauce. Now you take some corn husks and line them with masa and then wrap within each one a portion of the spiced pork. The corn husk thus forms a skin about the succulent heart of pork and masa. You steam them in kettles for about an hour and they are ready for eating. It is usual for Mexican families to make a great store of tamales and heat them each day in a dry frying pan.

While we were eating, a celebrated Mexican actor joined us. He came from Mexico City, with stimulating stories of the life there. Then we settled down to aimless, pleasant talk of Monterrey. The city with the ringing name is not quite as full of charm as one might wish. It is the centre of the Mexican experiment to raise the standard of living through fatter wages and mass production. So you have factory chimneys polluting the air and offending the panorama of hills. And you have countless shops filled with mass-production, gimcrack ornaments and flimsy garments. I thought this part of Monterrey trashy and sad. Our hostess told us that the story book customs of the early Spanish life survive ; they still struggle to hold their own against the invasion of machines. The boys and girls still gather in the plazas at night, with the shade of the high trees and the scarlet petals of the poinsettias catching the lamp light, and the splashing of the fountain that Maximilian gave them, to play at courtship. And there, as they encircle the plaza, the hearts of the love-sick boys beat quickly and the eyes of the girls flash and their lips part in mock disdain, just as if they still heard some ancestral voice from the Ramblas in Barcelona long before the sweet summer evenings were shattered by the booming of insurgent guns.

Our hostess made us like Monterrey. In the end, the memory of our evening was wrapped about her serene smile. We met also the plump old Mexican cook who had made the tamales. (We had heard the gay clattering of her pots and pans in the distance). She came, with fruits and coffee in her wide, capable hands. Last year, her mistress gave her a wonderful present. She allowed her to make the long journey to San Luis Potosi to renew the vows she had made to Saint Francis when she was a little girl. The old cook wept with joy over such a gift—and told her mistress that a miracle would surely happen in such an amazing time. When she came back, she said that the miracle *had* happened. The church of Saint Francis was upon a lonely spur of land ten miles from the present railway line. The good old woman had to trudge along the abandoned track by which people once travelled to San Luis Potosi. On the way, she walked through an old railway tunnel and this was her miracle. “I walked under the earth”, she said. “I told you, Signora, that a miracle would come out of your kindness”.

About half-past ten o'clock, Richard and I left the beautiful house. We dared not change the even serenity of our dinner, so we called a horse carriage instead of a mad, quick motor car. For two hours we drove gently through the dark streets. There were Christmas lights in some of the windows and in the sumptuous part of the town, where the houses were big and white, there were lighted trees, in celebration of the coming Christmas holiday. Again the poinsettias hung down and burned like sharp-pointed flames when the lamp light from the carriage caught them. We talked of ourselves and of nothing; a sleepy conversation with no accompanying sounds but the clip clop of the horse's hoofs, and the hoarse pleading of a prostitute who clattered open her window shutters, to show us a sad, lighted room within. When we paused in the Plaza Purisimo, where the horse willingly ceased his clip clopping, we descended and walked under the trees. The only sound was the gentle splash of Maximilian's fountain; a sound so faint that it came from the heart of the last century. The sculpture rose from four fabulous stone dolphins. It was a melancholy fountain and the water did not dance upon the stone; it fell sadly, like water in a dark cave. The rose bushes were lighted by one monstrous



glaring lamp about which a thousand bewildered moths fluttered; so many that you could hear their wings beating on the glass.

Next day, we travelled back to the Rio Grande. The weather was still kind to us. We stopped here and there, sometimes to watch the indolent Mexicans dozing upon their doorsteps, sometimes to smell the mosquito wood fires and once, when we turned the knob of the radio, to listen to a Chopin polonaise. The full wonder of wireless came to me then. When the polonaise was ended, we looked out and saw the level desert, with its great sweeps of purple sage, mocking birds darting among the wild sunflowers and above, the slow wheeling vultures cutting the air with their scissor wings. Far away, from a curve in the road, one languid rider appeared in a cloud of dust.

We conquered one more sweep of the desert and found ourselves looking towards the frontier. The adventure was over and, with sentimental appreciation, the radio in the car began the opening phrases of *Autumn*, by Chaminade.

## MR. ERNEST BROWN'S THREE QUESTIONS

BY JOHN ARMITAGE

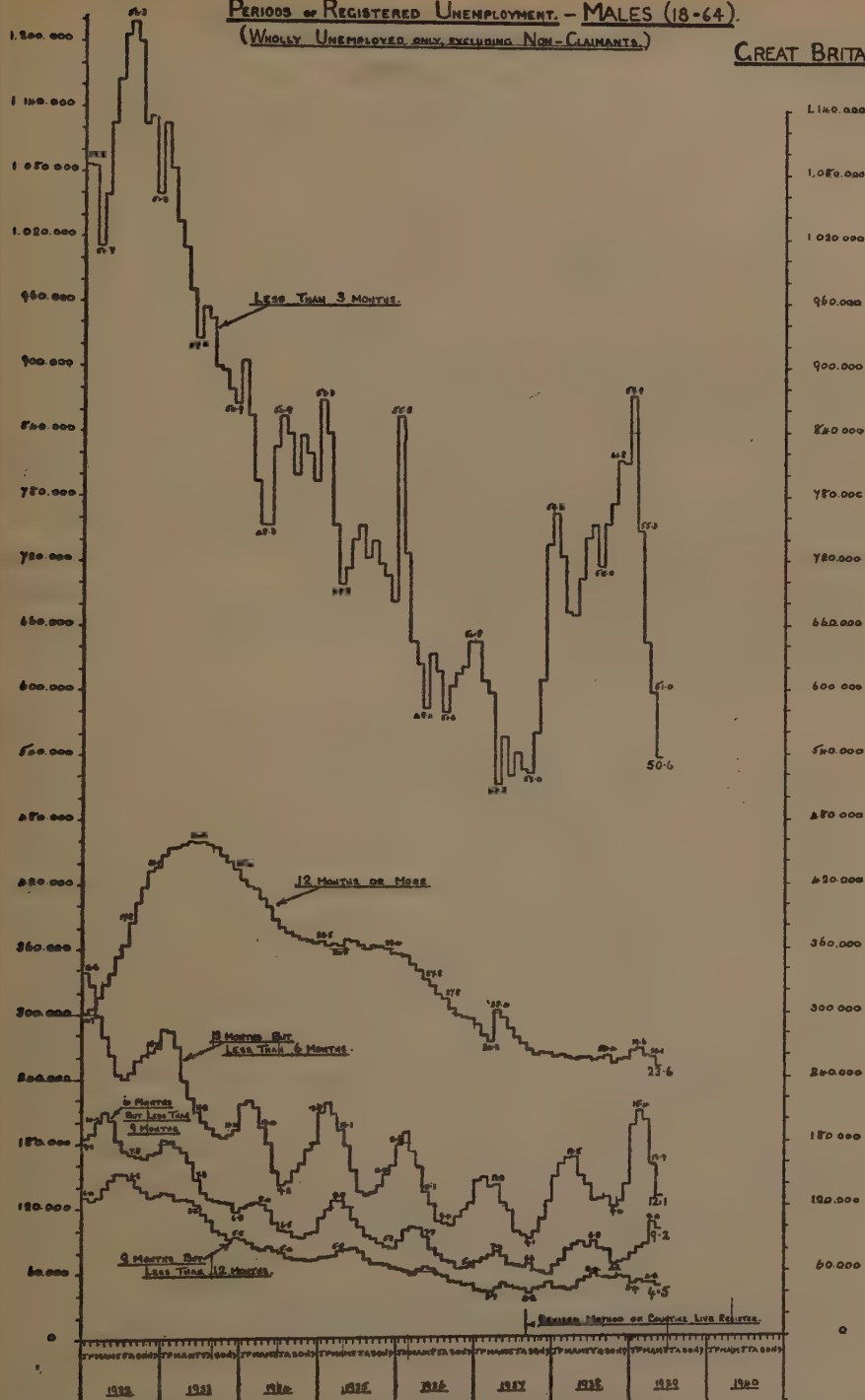
**F**ORTUNATELY, for those who have yet to find work, the recent improvement in employment figures has served to quicken interest in the whole problem of unemployment and not to lessen it. True, Mr. Ernest Brown, the Minister of Labour, allowed himself in the House of Commons on August 3, the luxury of a single reference to himself as " a happy Minister "; true, also, that he was at pains to point out to the Opposition that not all the improvement in employment was due to rearmament but, in their several ways, the Government, the Opposition, the Trades Union Congress and others are fully alive to the difficulties which may face this country when, and if, the rearmament race ends. Speaking on the meaning of " full employment " and pointing out that " there is no demand for labour in general and no supply of labour in general ; instead, there is a great variety of demands for specific kinds of labour in specific places ", Mr. Brown went on to say, in the House of Commons,

There are three questions to be asked about an unemployed man. First, who is he ?—which means, is he fully employable ?—secondly, what has his craft been if any, or has he ever had a craft ? and thirdly—and this is vital nowadays in view of the disproportion of long-term unemployed in certain areas—where is he ?

A study of the chart on the opposite page makes clear certain aspects of unemployment. Whatever is done, whatever schemes are put into operation, there must be a body of men, who, on any given date, are not in employment. These men are represented on the chart as having been unemployed for less than three months. As the chart shows, the men have never been much more than 60% of the total number of unemployed and never much less than 48% ; moreover, in recent years, the percentage has never represented less than 500,000 men. Concerning these men there is very little need to worry ; they

PERIODS OF REGISTERED UNEMPLOYMENT. - MALES (18-64).  
(WHOLLY UNEMPLOYED ONLY, EXCLUDING NON-CLAIMANTS.)

GREAT BRITAIN.



The figures on the right and left of the chart represent the number of men unemployed; the figures on the chart the percentage of the total unemployed which that number represents at a given time.



include everyone, who has been unemployed for a short time, and many of them have been unemployed only for a matter of days. Certain industries make it necessary for men to be without employment for short periods, but since these men are covered by an insurance scheme their position is quite sound, economically, and very few of them, at the present time, are finding their way into the ranks of the long-term unemployed. To regard many of these men, with pity, as unemployed is little short of an insult. They are fit, they have a craft and in answer to Mr. Brown's first question, they are fully employable.

The other groups represented on the chart offer a very different problem. After six months unemployment the men are moving dangerously towards the long-term unemployed group (12 months or more) and once they arrive at this sinister goal, many different factors, apathy, indifferent health, and all the penalties of long idleness conspire to keep them there. There are 250,000 long-term unemployed and many of them have been unemployed for five years or more.

I am afraid that we must accept the fact that many of the older men, who have been unemployed for a very long time, will not again find work. But, for the rest, it is of paramount importance that as many men as possible should be rescued from their plight while others must be prevented from ever getting into it. In order to do this a certain number of men should first of all be removed from the unemployment register. These are men who, for physical or mental defects, are not normally suitable for industry. When this has been done, there will be left men whose health and fitness needs attention, because capable of improvement. Only a proportion of these will be suitable for further skilled or semi-skilled training but it is very necessary to see that all those, who have the ability, are given the opportunity. What Mr. Brown's questions mean is first, every man must be fully employable; secondly, he must have a craft; thirdly, he must be in an area where suitable work already is, or suitable work must be brought to his area.

Recently, I have had the opportunity of visiting many training centres for the unemployed. In particular I was able to see a good deal of what is being done in the Newcastle, Gateshead and Durham areas. Whatever may be the objections

of employers and the Trades Union Congress to Government training schemes—and these objections are not without substance—I think it must be admitted that the administration of these centres is very carefully carried out, while the keenness of the instructors, and the interest and enthusiasm of managers and officials are everywhere apparent. Nor can the suggestion that the Ministry of Labour official is not interested in the man, or the man's place in industry, be accorded the slightest factual support.

There are a number of different training centres under the direct control of the Ministry of Labour, but it is best to begin a brief review of their work with the Juvenile Instructional Centres, which are run by the local education authority with the help of a Ministry of Labour grant (in the case of the Special Areas 100%), the Ministry of Labour having the right to inspect and report. Junior Instructional Centres are only to be found where the number of unemployed juveniles (14—18) warrant the setting up of a centre. All unemployed juveniles may be required to attend, and the boys in their centre and the girls in theirs are given very useful instruction in work which is likely to be of value to them, together with a certain amount of applied arithmetic and physical training. The success of the Junior Instructional Centres depends very largely upon the enthusiasm of the Director of Education and his staff, but in Durham, for instance, where there is every reason to believe that the Junior Instructional Centres are particularly well managed, it has been found that in addition to aiding juveniles to fit successfully into industry, the influence of working in a house, which is economically and pleasantly run, has had a marked effect upon the girls' home life, helping them very substantially to make a good home when the time comes for them to marry. The drawbacks to a Junior Instructional Centre, however, are obvious. In the first place, when work is offered, the juvenile must accept it whether or not the work is really suitable. Secondly, as employment prospects improve, the good juveniles are swallowed up into industry, often in blind-alley occupations, leaving the training at the Junior Instructional Centres to be lavished on the weaker brethren who are the least likely to benefit from it. Further, a centre will sometimes be closed,

and this is a real tragedy, if it is believed that the Junior Instructional Centres have a wider, educational function than that of placing a juvenile in his first job.

In addition, the education authority, under a similar grant from the Ministry of Labour, have under their control re-conditioning centres for juveniles, these centres providing for a period of three months, an open-air life, mostly gardening, in addition to some school subjects and physical training. The Ministry of Labour also have re-conditioning centres, known as Instructional Centres. To these centres are sent men whose fortunes and physical well-being are at a low ebb due, generally, to long unemployment and for whom a complete change of three months seems necessary. Men know that while they are away their families are well cared for. In these centres the men are housed in huts, given substantial meals and a certain amount of instruction in carpentry and machine shops together with simple applied arithmetic and physical training. Later, they go out into the open, quarrying stone, helping to build roads and bridges. Seeing them there it is difficult to imagine that they are the so-called unemployables.

There are other types of centre but the chief work of training is done at the Local Training Centres, attended by men who live at home, and Government Training Centres where the serious business of giving a man a six months' training in a particular craft is undertaken. Men attending Government Training Centres live away from home in lodgings, going to work at the centre under ordinary conditions of employment. Little attempt is made to place men direct into industry from Local Training Centres, which, generally speaking, are regarded as a preparatory school for the Government Training Centres. A man, obviously suitable for training, would be sent direct to a Government Training Centre, but an applicant of doubtful ability would be sent first to a Local Training Centre, to see if he had sufficient capacity for further training, or until he had reached a required standard, which, in any case, he must do within three months.

The work in the Local Training Centres is of a more elementary kind but it is craft training, nevertheless, and a man passes very quickly, if competent, through the early stages of learning to



use his tools in the machine shops, in bricklaying, in house decorating or whatever it is he has chosen to do. Every man is required to pass a regular test to make sure that he is maintaining progress, while in Local Training Centres unlike Government Training Centres, a man comes under a certain amount of medical attention, particularly for teeth and eyes, and he attends regularly a physical training class. Many people, myself among them, would like to see facilities for physical training established at Government Training Centres in spite of the argument that Government Training Centres are supposed to reproduce normal factory conditions. It is possible to train for a great many crafts in the Government Training Centres. Naturally, with the demand as it is, the engineering trades get the lion's share of the trainees. Different centres, however, will specialize in different trades and Park Royal, in London, which is one of the biggest centres, almost wholly devoted to engineering, runs a most successful training course for waiters with a public restaurant attached. Soldiers, who are just finishing seven years with the colours, take advantage of this waiters' course, as they do of other forms of training. Wallsend, another Government Training Centre I have had the opportunity of visiting, in addition to large classes for engineering and bricklaying, takes pride in its hairdressing department, the trainees having excellent records in this class of work.

I have written of a Physical Training Centre in a previous article in *THE FORTNIGHTLY*. This type of centre is confined almost entirely to the Special Areas and it is a drawback to the excellent work that it does that the man who has attended such a centre gets no priority in obtaining a job through the Labour Exchanges. The official attitude is that the most experienced man must be offered the job.

The training centres have done excellent work. Whatever may be the objections to them, and these objections must be examined, the fact that they have been putting 15,000 men a year back into work cannot lightly be dismissed. Conditions of labour have changed and are changing. There is a place in industry for the process worker, who although not skilled in the accepted sense of the term, is yet fully competent to work many of the modern machines. There is the tremendous growth

of the light industry, able to absorb large numbers of juvenile and women workers. The light industry offers juveniles high rates of pay until they are 20 ; afterwards it has no use for them at a man's rate of pay. The light industry, it is argued, is a blind-alley occupation far more insidious than the recognized blind-alley jobs like errand boy. Lured by the pay it attracts boys, who, in former times, would be starting a long period of apprenticeship. Yet the light industry is a valuable economic unit ; it has come to stay and must be manned. The trainee, says the employer, is valuable under certain conditions but, at the best, he is only a process worker and is not worth the wage of a really skilled man ; moreover, he runs a serious risk of being unemployed under changing conditions as he is not readily employable in another capacity without another course of training. The trainee, says the Trades Union Congress, is a menace to the skilled craftsman who has served his apprenticeship. He is not worth the wage of the skilled man, but if he is admitted at less than the skilled rate of pay, he may prove capable of doing a particular job, at present held by a skilled man with the result that the skilled man loses his job and wage levels are lowered. /

No easy solution of the problem presents itself. It would appear that a planned entry into industry, meeting with the approval of employers and the Trades Union Congress, is necessary if the good work of the Government training centres is not to be jeopardized by the determination of the Trades Union Congress not to give an inch for fear that the employers will take an ell.

There is now the Military Training Act which requires all men of the age of 20 to spend six months of their lives in military camps. If this Act is renewed in more peaceful times, it may be turned to great advantage in a world not of war but of industry. The fact that soldiers nearing the end of their service take advantage of Government Training Centres gives a lead. I submit, and I believe that it should be possible to carry it out, that a system of training should be evolved whereby every young man, who did not possess a proper job to which to return, should, at the conclusion of his militia training be given the opportunity to join an industrial training centre, wider in

scope than that at present offered by the Government. There would be two advantages of such a plan. The blind-alley jobs, including the light industries, could be supplied with their full complement of workers from the age group 15—20, and in the case of the light industries, by women. Secondly, if the training scheme were sufficiently wide, meeting the employers argument that the present six months course is too short, there would be the beginnings of a planned entry into industry which was to the best advantage of every man able to display sufficient ability to warrant training for a skilled or semi-skilled occupation.

Nevertheless, it seems unlikely that the Trades Union Congress will ever agree to any such scheme unless the planning goes further and considers the whole question of wages. The grading of jobs and the grading of wages throughout industry would be an obvious solution to this problem. Skilled men, working on a particular machine, would then know that their job could not be usurped by a trainee at a lower wage, although, naturally, the trainee would be entitled to take the job if he were also paid the wage. There are many objections to such a course, and in practice it would be difficult to carry out, but at least it is clear that agreement between Government, employers and the Trades Union Congress is vitally necessary if we are to escape from the position of the unemployed man, without a craft, being used as an issue of contention between the Government and the Trades Union Congress.

A Royal Commission has been appointed and is shortly to issue its report on "Location of Industry". It would be premature, before the findings of the Royal Commission are made known, to attempt to find a solution for Mr. Brown's third question, but this much is certain, a situation whereby men still live on in villages around a derelict mine, without work and without hope of work, is intolerable, and problems such as these cannot be allowed to solve themselves by the departure of the young and more adventurous and the gradual dwindling of a colony of older people. The whole question of location of industry is stuffed with difficulties. So far few people seem to have advanced further than a general idea that light industries should not be allowed to string out, nose to tail, along the Great West Road. No doubt this is so, but we are



not going to solve our industrial difficulties by insisting that factories of this type should go elsewhere. For, as I see it, training remains the first consideration for the unemployed, and training will never be any good until the three most interested parties, the Government, the Trades Union Congress, and the employers are agreed upon its form and value, and until the man himself, can feel certain that there is work of long duration at the end of it.

## MECHANIZATION AND THE ARMY

BY R. ANSELL WELLS

**A**N article which was published in a contemporary a few weeks ago contained the following passage :—" . . . a plain saddle or, better still, a government universal saddle. *The latter may now be obtained at a very nominal figure from the surplus stocks released since the mechanization of the cavalry* ".

It was as a direct outcome of the drastic reductions which were made in the strength of the army that those in command turned their attention to mechanization ; they argued that with a small army it was essential that those forces which we did possess should be on equal footing with the forces of possible enemies ; that meant mechanization, and with so small an army we were told that it was essential that mechanization should be complete if it was to have any hope of success. So, in the dark days of disarmament, mechanization was undertaken as a sort of last resort upon the part of those responsible for maintaining the efficiency of the army.

They carried on with this policy in spite of the warnings of experienced cavalry soldiers and in the face of the weight of public opinion, in which connection it is interesting to note that history shows that measures which have been contrary to the expressed opinions of both the experts and the majority of the people have had but short lives before them. So, we have to-day an army which is mechanized right through and contains but two cavalry units, the 1st Royal Dragoons and the Royal Scots Greys.

To study for a moment actual conditions of active service in these days of " modern " warfare we may turn our attention to recent events in Spain and Palestine. In Spain, throughout the civil war there was ample use for cavalry, and in Palestine we have seen the complete collapse of action by motorized forces.

In the latter country we quickly found that armoured cars and similar vehicles were quite useless in the face of barricades upon the roadways of a hilly and rocky district ; the cars could not proceed along the roads or strike off into the surrounding country, and their crews were sniped when they endeavoured to clear the barricades. It must be obvious that such circumstances will be the rule rather than the exception, and that the case for complete mechanization can only be founded upon the experience of pen-and-ink soldiers in the government, whose knowledge of service conditions does not extend beyond those which are met with in the course of manœuvres on Salisbury Plain.

In this country where there are more and better roads per square mile than in any other country in the world, and where we have a large military zone which affords practically perfect "going" it is not surprising that mechanized forces can operate with success, though there have been occasions in the past when there has been a severe dislocation of manœuvres due to the flooding caused by heavy rains and the ensuing immobility of the motorized units. Such conditions as these do not exist in those parts of the world where the next war, if it ever comes, is likely to be fought ; in Central Europe roads are few and far between, and there are large areas of bog and marsh and equally large areas of forest in which the trees will effectively prevent the movement of mechanized units. In addition to which we have an Empire which embraces every kind of country and which it is our duty to protect with troops which are able to operate properly in those districts to which they are sent.

Other countries, less favoured in regard to their manœuvre grounds and in closer touch with possible war zones, have long ago realized that mechanized forces are a luxury item in the armament programme. They have appreciated that those units will only be efficient under certain conditions and for no longer than the roads along which they must proceed, and by which their petrol and spare parts must reach them, escape the heavy shelling to which they will assuredly be exposed when once the opposing forces have consolidated the positions which they will take up after the first few weeks of hostilities. Russia is buying horses and is taking the long view by fulfilling not only the immediate requirements of her cavalry, but also laying firm



foundations upon which to build up a sound breeding programme. France is paying a great deal of attention to the improvement of her already excellent cavalry, and Germany has gone in for horses on a larger scale than ever before. An example of this is to be found in the fine new cavalry school at Munich where picked officers and men are engaged upon the training of young horses under ideal conditions, and where the establishment is so large and so well run that it can deal with 1,000 horses per annum.

We have seen the failure of our own mechanized troops when they were called upon to do what was for them the impossible, and we have witnessed the edifying spectacle of men who had lost no opportunity of curtailing the cavalry being compelled to fall back upon the few horses which public opinion had forced them to retain, in order to extricate themselves, and the country, from what would otherwise have been a very awkward predicament. It is only natural that we should ask, after having seen all this, whether those to whom the Nation's defences are entrusted have learned their lesson, but the answer to that question is far from re-assuring. It is said that when it was thought desirable to reinforce the Scots Greys, who were doing such excellent work in Palestine, another regiment was ordered to stand by, with its horses, ready to go abroad at a moment's notice. To this order the colonel commanding replied that he could not comply as his horses had all been taken away and sold two and a half years before! There have certainly been large dispersal sales of army horses up and down the country, in which we have wantonly scattered sound animals which knew their job. Not only have we disposed of the horses but we have also sold their saddlery and equipment with them, and thereby created a joke at which foreign soldiers are still laughing while they ride our horses in our saddles and bridles.

That is the position at the moment and the public is now anxious to know whether those in responsible positions are sufficiently broad-minded to admit their mistake, or whether they are blindly and pig-headedly pursuing their own policy in the face of proved facts. Again, the trend of events is not altogether what one could hope, though some belated appreciation of the state of affairs has led the army authorities to make

some purchases of horses for military purposes. The country districts have been visited by officers who have instructions to purchase up to 10,000 horses for the army, the animals which they require being young horses likely to make troop horses. These horses are being sent to Weedon, which is now the only depôt which is at full working capacity, and the prices which are being paid for them are up to 80 guineas apiece. This is a very welcome contribution to the finances of the horse-breeding farmers and a very necessary step, but it is poor value for the taxpayers' money when it is realized that the trained animals which were taken from the army were sold at prices ranging from 7 to 30 guineas and averaging somewhere about 15 guineas.

So much is known; what further developments may be contemplated will only be appreciated when they are put into force, but there are certain things which should be taken in hand without delay. First and foremost, the yearly grant which the War Office used to make to the Hunters' Improvement and National Light Horse Breeding Society and which was discontinued last year, should be renewed without delay; the army need horses and they should bear some of the burden of the production of those horses and not leave it entirely to private enterprise to supply them with such a necessary implement of war. It is no fault of theirs that the continued supply of light horses is assured through the unselfish efforts of the officers and members of the Society in question and the welcome grant which they receive from the Racecourse Betting Control Board; the army must shoulder at least some portion of its own responsibilities. Then, when this has been done immediate steps should be taken to re-open the remount depôts at places such as Melton Mowbray, so that the horses which are purchased can commence their schooling without delay.

The re-horsing of the army must be undertaken upon rather more logical lines than was the mechanization, and there can be no better suggestion than that which has been made by a contemporary, that the first step should be the re-institution of the Union Brigade which would mean returning their horses to the Inniskilling Dragoon Guards so that they could take their place once more with the Royals and the Greys. Other regiments with the fine cavalry tradition which still exists, despite the

reek of petrol and oil, should once more have their horses, but they should be given them soon, before they have enlisted so many recruits that the old cavalry soldiers are in the minority, and while there is still time to carry out the training which is so necessary for both man and beast.

The spirit of the cavalry regiments, The Cavalry Spirit, is the spirit of the army and the mainspring of all that is best in our fighting forces. It still exists but influences are at work which aim at crowding it out and forcing it to give place to an era of cheap publicity and stunts of a kind which are usually associated with mountebanks. Now, when the first men of the new militia are being called to the colours, is the time when an enlargement of the cavalry should be undertaken. These young men, many of them from offices, have come through their medical tests with flying colours, but it is one thing to have the essentials of physical fitness and quite another to bring a sound body up to that pitch of strength and fitness which is necessary in time of war. The majority of these young men have followed sedentary occupations and their muscles are not yet up to the standard of "hardness" that the rigours of an expeditionary force would require; they have a knowledge of motors and internal combustion engines gained in the course of their ordinary lives, but no knowledge of horses.

It has been said, with truth, that in such a mechanical age as the present, the average young man of normal intelligence can be trained to drive a motor car and to look after it, in a period of six months, but that training will have no effect upon his physique. The training of a cavalryman, on the other hand, the schooling in horsemanship and horsemastership, will need a period of three years before the finished article is produced, self-reliant, a good horseman with the initiative to act on his own when the occasion demands such action, and the *esprit de corps* which will enable him to work with others on all other occasions. Would it not be better, therefore, if the new militia was to be trained as cavalry? The majority of them have the ground-work of mechanics already, they should now start upon the training which will make cavalrymen of them and will, at the same time, make their bodies fit and able to withstand the rigours of active service should such ever fall to their lot.



If those in command were to take this view of the training, they would be following a precedent which has already been established by so famous a regiment as the Honourable Artillery Company which, last year, decided to retain their horses for use at the annual camp, although the regiment is mechanized. Their reasons for doing this were just those set out above; they realized that cavalry drill had an effect upon a territorial unit which mechanized drill could never have, and that the exercise which it entailed raised the standard of fitness to a pitch which could otherwise only be attained by a considerable amount of arduous physical training, undertaken in time that could either be more profitably employed in other forms of training, or which could be devoted to recreation.

Is it too much to hope that after all this time and the bitter experience which has been gained, the War Office will come to a true realization of the geography of Europe and of the Empire, and the very pressing need for a proper force of cavalry, which are the only troops that can operate successfully over a great part of the earth's surface? Let us hope that some steps will be taken to restore the horse to his rightful place with the Colours so that we may say with Nestor,

“Methinks the noise of trampling steeds I hear,  
Thickening this way, and gathering on my ear;”

what time the army once more follow the instructions of their own cavalry training manual and “make much of their horses”.

## THE NOVELS OF JOHN STEINBECK

BY ARTHUR CALDER-MARSHALL

I HAVE always held, as an article of faith rather than anything else, that the distinction between 'popular fiction' and 'literature' was a false one. I believed that much 'high-brow' literature, despite its stylistic nicety, and its sensitive appreciation of mood and character lacked the action, the dramatic timing and humanity of novels, which from an æsthetic point of view were definitely inferior. A great masterpiece, I told myself, would combine these qualities. The distinction between highbrow and lowbrow would be resolved. Those who read merely for 'story interest' would be satisfied as much as those who looked for deeper literary and psychological subtleties.

In ten years of reviewing, I have read many novels which interested me, stimulated me or gave me the feeling of æsthetic satisfaction. Yet I have never once even been tempted to use the word 'masterpiece' about contemporary work. Never, until I read John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*.

*The Grapes of Wrath* was published in the spring of this year in the United States. It was chosen by practically every book society, and praised as highly in the literary magazines as in the popular press. It swept the country. The film rights were bought for thirteen thousand pounds. Alexander Woollcott devoted the whole of one of his Sunday night broadcasts to England to its praise. It has already been heralded by discerning English critics, and when it is published by Messrs. Heinemann on September 7, I am prepared to prophesy that its success in this country will be as immediate and as widespread as it was in America.

The success of *Gone with the Wind* or *Anthony Adverse* is easy to understand. But it has little to do with serious literature. The success of *The Grapes of Wrath* on the other hand is remarkable

and encouraging. It is not an escapist book. It is devoted to contemporary America and concerned with the fortunes of a group of poverty-stricken and dispossessed farmers, whose way of life has none of the glamour of the French Revolution or the Civil War. The facts from which it is made are harsh and the problems it presents are ones which many people are only too anxious to ignore. Yet it is written with such beauty and restraint; the delineation of character is so honest; the incident is so rich, that the reader is compelled to share the fortunes of the Joad family.

Before criticising this latest novel of John Steinbeck's, I am going to give a short review of his previous work, because except for *Of Mice and Men*, it is almost unknown. Yet in this earlier work, we can find the seeds of *The Grapes of Wrath*.

John Steinbeck published his first novel, *Cup of Gold*, in 1929, a few months before the depression struck America. It was an odd novel for a young Californian to write, because it was based on the life of Sir Henry Morgan, the Elizabethan pirate, a theme far removed from the realities of life on the Pacific coast in the late twenties.

What distinguished it from other first novels was the way in which it was bad. It was free from contemporary influences, Sinclair Lewis, Hemingway or anyone else. It was gauche. Conversation was stilted and unreal. The symbolism stuck out a mile. Landscape and incident were manipulated to fit the jigsaw in the author's mind. Though at rare intervals he struck the right metaphor, more often than not the press of rich images obscured rather than clarified his meaning.

After reading *Cup of Gold*, a critic could say no more than that John Steinbeck would grow either into a writer of genius or into an incompetent romanticist. The odds were 99 to 1 on the latter.

The depression came and for three years no book was published by John Steinbeck. If anybody had been sufficiently interested, they would have said that like so many romantic young men, John Steinbeck had been knocked out by the slump. He couldn't take it.

In the autumn of 1932, however, a loose collection of short stories appeared in the guise of a novel, called *The Pastures of*



*Heaven*. The locale was California, the time the present. It was very different from *Cup of Gold* superficially. The crude romanticism was gone; an attempt was being made to understand the life of his time, and especially the problems foreshadowed in the first book, namely, what drives a man to leave the security of his home and seek fortune elsewhere; what is the tie of love and hate which links man to the land he tills.

In any age, Steinbeck is interested in the pioneer; the man who in Elizabethan times took ship and sailed the Spanish Main, the farmer leaving the middle west to open the new land of California, the labour organiser going into the field and risking his life to get a bunch of working stiff's ten cents an hour more. He picks the man, in whom self-interest is subordinated to the vision of a new land or a new order.

"You are a little boy," says Merlin in *Cup of Gold*. "You want the moon to drink from as a golden cup; and so, it is very likely you will become a great man—if only you will remain a little child. All the world's great have been little boys who wanted the moon; running and climbing, they sometimes caught a firefly. But if one grow to a man's mind, that mind must see that it cannot have the moon and would not want it if it could—and so, it catches no fireflies".

In *In Dubious Battle*, the epitaph of Jim Nolan, shot by the vigilantes, is given by Mac. "This guy didn't want nothing for himself". Casy, in *The Grapes of Wrath*, whose last words are "You fellas don't know what you're doin'". You're helpin' to starve kids" as a club crashes into his head, is the same type, as Joseph Wayne, who thirty years before must leave home because "they're homesteading the western land. You have only to live a year on the land and build a house and plough a bit and the land is yours. No one can ever take it away".

In different ages, the spirit of the pioneer is the same, but his activity is different. One may be an explorer, another a farmer breaking new land, a third a preacher or a trade union organizer.

In *The Pastures of Heaven*, Steinbeck was feeling his way towards his later work. His stories are novelist's sketches, many to be taken up and filled out later.

But underlying them all is an irony which springs from the contrast of appearance and reality, or what is and what might be. *The Pastures of Heaven* is the name given to a valley by an 18th century Spanish soldier, who looking down from the

mountains saw the land stretching beautiful below. The valley still shows beautiful from the mountains. But in the valley itself, life is narrow and hard and mean.

These stories are nearly all tragic in intention, but the reader often feels that the tragedy is not implicit in the material, but is thrust on it by the author's will. The same fault runs through the next novel, *To an Unknown God*.

*To an Unknown God* is the story of Joseph Wayne and his brothers who come to the Salinas Valley, California, from Vermont at the turn of the century. They open up the land and it bears a rich yield. The herds and the family grow. But always there is the shadow of the drought and finally the drought comes, and with it ruin.

This, the theme of the struggle between the farmer and the elements, should have been perfect for Steinbeck, sensitive to the earth's feel, the thrust of the bull, the seeds pushing to the light and drinking from the soil, the silence and intimacy of simple lives, and the curious marriage of the farmer to his farm. His work is photographic in that best sense, when the camera shows us sharp angles of nature which we have never picked from the multiple impressions of form and colour.

But a philosophical confusion made Steinbeck tie a mystical neo-paganism in with the story. The tree beneath which Joseph built his house becomes the living symbol of his dead father, and a rock in a near pinewood, from which a deep spring gushes, is an old pagan object of worship. When Joseph's wife, fascinated but repelled, climbs the rock 'to tame it', this is what happens.

"Her heel dug for a third step. And then the moss stripped off a little. Her hands gripped them and tore it out. Joseph saw her head describe a little arc and strike the ground. As he ran toward her, she turned slowly on her side. Her whole body shuddered violently for a second, and then relaxed. He stood over her for an instant before he ran to the spring and filled his hands with water. But when he came back to her he let the water fall to the ground, for he saw the position of her neck and the grey that was stealing into her cheeks. He sat stolidly on the ground beside her and mechanically picked up her hand and found the fingers clutched full of pine needles. He felt for her pulse and found none there . . ."

Though the weakness of this passage is partly due to bad paragraphing, the central objection is that the death has been determined by symbolic and not psychological or natural needs.

She doesn't die. Steinbeck kills her, to make her fit into a preconceived pattern.

Again, when Joseph commits suicide by opening his veins, he floats into the sky and the rains come. "I should have known", he whispered, "I am the rain". . . . "I am the land", he said, "and I am the rain. The grass will grow out of me in a little while".

Steinbeck's first three books brought him small fame and less fortune. Instead of going to New York and meeting the 'right people', he continued to live in a fishing village on the Californian coast, fishing for his food and writing stories and novels for a public that didn't seem to want to read them. His most famous short story, "The Red Pony" was written at this time, though it was not published in book form until 1937.\*

*The Red Pony* is a semi-autobiographical story, falling into three parts. These are so loosely connected that it would have been better to print them as three separate stories. But with that proviso, it is the finest thing which Steinbeck had written up to this time, and one of the finest stories in the English language.

"Then Jody stood and watched the pony, and he saw things he had never noticed about any other horse, the sleek, sliding flank muscles and the cords of the buttocks, which flexed like a closing fist, and the shine the sun put on the red coat. Having seen horses all his life, Jody had never looked at them very closely before. But now he noticed the moving ears which gave expression and even inflection of expression to the face. The pony talked with his ears. You could tell exactly how he felt about everything by the way his ears pointed. Sometimes they were stiff and upright and sometimes lax and sagging. They went back when he was angry or fearful, and forward when he was anxious and curious and pleased; and their exact position indicated which emotion he had".

It is not an ambitious story; but it is as simple and perfect as that description of the pony. The reader is infinitely more concerned about whether that pony lives or dies, than he is about the death of Joseph Wayne's wife.

The next novel Steinbeck published gave him success and publicity. But it was not the success or publicity he wanted. *Tortilla Flat*, a loose collection of stories written about the Mexican paisanos of Monterrey, California, was written in a pseudo-naïve style more reminiscent of Anatole France than of Steinbeck. It was written out of love for these people, whom

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\* Published in *The Long Valley*.



Steinbeck knew well. But the American public pounced on it as being 'cute' and in an introduction to a reprint of the book, Steinbeck wrote disgustedly

"I wrote these stories because they were true stories and because I liked them. But literary slummers have taken these people up with the vulgarity of duchesses who are amused and sorry for a peasantry. These stories are out and I cannot recall them. But I shall never again subject to the vulgar touch of the *decent* these good people of laughter and kindness, of honest lusts and direct eyes, of courtesy beyond politeness. If I have ever done them harm by telling a few of their stories I am sorry. But it will never happen again".

*In Dubious Battle*, the novel which followed, was written in a very different mood. Turning from the struggle of the farmer against the elements, which he had treated in *To an Unknown God*, to the struggle of the agricultural labourer for a livelihood, he laid his action in a strike of apple-pickers, those itinerant workers who go from state to state harvesting, here fruit, there cotton, there vegetables.

Though *Tortilla Flat* may in a sense be described as the study of a community, *In Dubious Battle* is his first attempt to show a community in action. Two communist organisers, hearing of a cut in wages in the fields, go out and begin organizing the fruit pickers. Mac, finding them sitting disconsolate, begins right away to start them acting in common. London's daughter is having a baby. Mac, without experience, delivers it. All the pickers in the camp make contributions. Some boil water, others give their linen for swabs, one steals a lantern.

When the child is delivered, Mac tells London to burn all the cloths, whether used or not. Jim Nolan, his assistant, says afterwards

"You didn't need all that cloth. Why did you tell London to burn it?"

"Look, Jim", Mac answers. "Don't you see? Every man who gave part of his clothes felt that the work was his own. They all feel responsible for that baby. It's theirs, because something from them went into it. To give back the cloth would cut them out. There's no better way to make men part of a movement than to have them give something to it. I bet they all feel fine right now".

In the course of the book, we see a herd of hopeless individuals become a group of resolute men, with pride, discipline and self-respect restored. It is a grim struggle. Men suffer and lose their lives. But the suffering is borne in common as well as the advantages.

In the *Daily Telegraph*, the reviewer wrote "One of the few successful propaganda novels I have read. It is really dangerous because really readable : *In Dubious Battle* has not got a word too much ; it is a concise, utterly realistic account ".

It would be more accurate to say that the book is successful propaganda, because the author was not concerned with propaganda, but with portraying in human terms the social struggle involved in the strike. Human sympathy is naturally on the side of the strikers, not because of any political bias, but on account of their distress and their courage.

*In Dubious Battle* is the first novel of Steinbeck's maturity. The early awkwardness has disappeared. The conflict between incident and symbol has been resolved. The story grows as naturally as a plant from its seed.

*Of Mice and Men* proved to be more popular than *In Dubious Battle*. But I think that time will prove it to be a work unworthy of Steinbeck's genius. Devoted to the vagrant worker's landhunger, it conceals beneath its finished technique a fundamental sentimentality. Lennie, the giant who is strong with his hands and weak in his head, is the over simplified noble simpleton. Subordinate characters such as the negro Crooks are convincing enough. On the stage, it may be possible to present the theme convincingly. The simplicity of treatment which mars the novel may make the play. But to me, Curley and his wife will always be rehashed versions of the bully and the vamp, that are familiar from the old fashioned Westerns.

And now to the *The Grapes of Wrath*. *The Grapes of Wrath* has a breadth and richness which make *In Dubious Battle* seem parochial. Whereas the reader watches the spread of the strike among the apple-pickers, he *lives* the story of the Joad family.

The Joads are carefully characterized individuals. There is Grampa, who lived all his life on the farm, now senile and bawdy ; and his wife, as senile but religious. There's Uncle John Joad, lost his wife because he thought her birthpangs were the bellyache, always trying to make it up to children and getting pie-eyed to ease his sense of sin. Ma Joad, tranquil, seeing everything and quietly governing, the moral balance of her family. Pa, losing grip because he lost the farm, and sort of guilty about Noah, because he wasn't born right. Noah, the eldest son, turned in

on himself, and Tom, just from prison on parole because he killed a man in hot blood, a fighter but not a mean killer. There's Al, the next brother, romanticising Tom for a killer and secretly hoping he's broken jail, girl-mad and car-mad. Rosasharn, crazy for love of her young husband, Connie Rivers, and big with child. The two youngest children, Ruthie and Winfield, to whom time is to-day and the world what you see around, so much and no more. And to complete the picture, an old evangelist called Casy, who preached hellfire and Jesus until all the farmers lost their land and now he's puzzling out a gospel which is 'Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow, but woe to him that is alone when he falleth, for he hath not another to help him up'.

These Joads have a simple code of life. They may murder or fornicate or get drunk, but they 'ain't mean'. Meanness is a way of doing things. You can be meanly charitable just as you can be meanly treacherous. You can never do a thing they call sin and be mean all the same. And you can violate the decalogue and still not be mean. Meanness is what makes you feel dirty and ashamed of yourself.

These Joads are a single family, but they are the type of hundreds of thousands of families, whom bad times and new farming methods and the banks are sweeping out of the middle west. They have lived and died on their home farm and now they are homeless.

But from the far West come men with handbills saying there's work and wealth in California. Fruitpickers are wanted in thousands; and in hundreds of thousands the dispossessed farmers and their families trek out to California, the land of plenty.

*The Grapes of Wrath* is the odyssey of one and all of these families. The furniture is sold at half its value. An old car is bought at twice its price. The last pig is killed and salted. And all the family is bundled on the old car, with the tent and the saucepans, clothes and tools, and dogs, to make the two thousand-mile journey across desert and over mountains to the Pacific.

There is little enough money for petrol; not a cent to spare for food above bare minimum. They camp by the roadside and



the first night out Grampa dies and there is no money to bury him proper and it is a crime to bury him without telling the law. So they bury him beside the creek and write on a scrap of paper torn from the end of a Bible, in case he's found and thought to be murdered.

"This here is William James Joad, dyed of a stroke, old old man. His fokes bured him becaaws they got no money to pay for funerls. Nobody kilt him, Jus a stroke and he dyed".

They join up with another couple, the Wilsons, and spread the load. Day after day, mile after mile, they go, meeting up with others making the same trek. We are concerned with the small but vital questions, will the tyres last? Will the money give out? How will Granma take the old man's death? With the tragedy of the dogs run over by the roadside, the helpless laughter of Rosasharn and Connie as they watch the funny people passing through a city; ought Ruthie and Winfield to have an ice cream; where is the next garage and will they have the right spare parts?

Every moment of this crazy journey becomes an intimate part of our lives and when the Joads meet the other families returning from California with tales of how there's no work and the Californians call you Okies and push you around and if there is work, they cut the wages so low there's nothing in it, we refuse to believe, just as the Joads refuse, because it is impossible that such endurance and sacrifice could be brought to nothing. We close our eyes to the distant future and pray that they will get across the mountains and we half-believe Rosasharn's dreams that Connie will take a correspondence course in something and they will get rich and have a refrigerator.

They come to the edge of the desert and there is a broad cool river and Noah cannot go any further. He wanders off down the river. He is gone for ever. And they part company with the Wilsons, because Mrs. Wilson is too ill to go on. Impelled by this vision that when the journey ends, there will be work and money, they push on, crossing the Californian border with Grandma lying dead under the tarpaulin in the back.

There is a wonderful moment of joy as they top the mountains and see the rich valleys lying below.

They stood, silent and awestruck, embarrassed before the great valley. The distance was thinned with haze and the land grew softer and softer in the distance. A windmill flashed in the sun, and its turning blades were like a little heliograph, far away. Ruthie and Winfield looked at it, and Ruthie whispered : " It's California ".

Winfield moved his lips silently over the syllables. " There's fruit " he said aloud.

It is merely a moment. In California, they find what they already knew in their hearts, that all the men returning from the west had said was true. They land in what is called a ' Hooverville ', an encampment outside a country town. There is no work and the vigilantes burn down the camp. They get into a government camp and for a time they are happy and comfortable there. But finally they are driven to leave, in order to get work. They get work and find that they are being used as strike breakers. They need the money so badly, they stick on. But as soon as the strike is broken, their pay is cut to the rate the strikers refused to take.

There is no end to the story of the Joads and there will be no end until the system which makes the presence of cheap migrant labour necessary is ended. The end which Steinbeck has chosen is an artificial and symbolical one. It is the only flaw in the whole book, a book which I have no hesitation in saying is the most important novel to come out of America for twenty years.

Tragic though the theme of *The Grapes of Wrath* is, it is a book filled with a sense of hope. The Joads and the people whom they meet on the road are fundamentally so fine that one feels that any changes that must be made can be done so. In the whole course of the novel, one never feels pity for them, chiefly because one is so identified with them that it would be self-pity and the Joads do not pity themselves.

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## LEGAL AID FOR POOR PERSONS

BY F. ELWYN JONES

AT the Kent Assizes last year a prisoner at the bar pleaded guilty to bigamy. When, however, the facts were being outlined to him by the prosecution, Mr. Justice Humphreys interposed to say that the accused should be defended. When the defendant re-appeared, after having had the benefit of legal advice, he withdrew his plea of guilty. So complete was his answer to the charge made against him that the prosecution then offered no evidence—and a verdict of “not guilty” was returned. The judge commented:

“I hope the time will come when every accused person unable to afford legal aid will be given it at the expense of the State. It is very necessary for those who preside in these Courts to be most vigilant not to sentence people who should not be sentenced, although they plead guilty. This man had an answer in law but did not know it”.

This case throws light on a big gap in Britain's social services—the failure to provide proper facilities for legal aid for poor persons. The necessity for this provision was recognized in Britain as far back as 1495, when Parliament instituted a poor persons procedure. Justices were to “assign counsel which shall give their counsels, nothing taking for the same” and also to appoint “an attorney for such poor person and all other officers requisite who shall do their duties without any reward”.

Since that time spasmodic attempts have been made in a haphazard way to bridge the gap between rich and poor in the Courts. So little progress was made in the nineteenth century however that before 1903 a prisoner whose means were insufficient for him to employ a solicitor and counsel in the ordinary way and who could not afford £1 3s. 6d. for a “dock brief” (entitling him to pick any barrister sitting in court) was forced to be unrepresented at his trial.

The Poor Prisoners Defence Act, 1903, brought the resources of the State to the aid of the prisoner. But the Act became a dead letter by virtue of the ruling that legal aid should only be



granted in cases where the prisoner had disclosed his defence at the time when the original crime was being enquired into. To remedy this harsh ruling was one of the purposes of the Poor Prisoners' Defence Act 1930, which is now the basis of the system under which State aid is granted in criminal cases.

The 1930 Act provides for the grant of legal aid to persons committed for trial for an indictable offence (*i.e.* one triable before a judge and jury) and the assignment to him of solicitor and counsel if a "defence certificate" is granted to him. These certificates cover the cost of solicitor and counsel.

As under the 1903 Act, before a certificate can be granted it must be proved to the satisfaction of the visiting Justice or the Judge to whom the application is made, that the prisoner's means are insufficient to enable him to obtain legal aid. A prisoner charged with murder need show nothing further than his poverty and, once he has done this, legal aid must be granted. In other cases it must appear to the Justices or Judge that "having regard to all the circumstances of the case (including the nature of such defence, if any, as may have been set up) . . . it is desirable in the interests of justice that the accused should have legal aid in the preparation and conduct of his defence at his trial". This provision makes it possible for legal aid to be granted even in cases where the prisoner is clearly guilty, but it appears desirable that he should have counsel to plead for him in mitigation of sentence.

The Act obviously gives room for much variation in practice. That which is "desirable in the interests of justice" is variously construed by different benches. Some appear to grant legal aid on the same principle as under the 1903 Act, that a defence must be disclosed upon the depositions; others hold that any person committed for trial for an indictable offence is entitled to legal aid if he wants it and cannot pay for it.

What has been the outcome of these two attitudes? Between 1931 and 1937 the average number of defence certificates granted was 1,561 a year. An average of 735 applications for legal aid was refused. Between 1930 and 1934 the tendency, particularly in the magistrates courts, was for the number of Defence Certificates to increase. Since 1934 however, the tendency has been the other way. Thus whereas in 1934, 1,880

Certificates were granted out of 8,675 indictable cases—a proportion of 1 in 4.6, in 1937 only 1,713 certificates were granted, whereas 9,083 cases were tried—a proportion of 1 in 5.3. It has been calculated that in 1934 only in 18.7 per cent. of the cases tried were defence certificates granted.

What was the fate of the remaining 81.3 per cent. ? Information is not available as to their means or the number who were in fact represented in the usual way. For this reason it is difficult to generalize about them. It should be noted, however, that motoring has brought far more men of substance before the criminal Court who can afford solicitor and counsel. Even allowing for this, however,

*“ it remains the case that the bulk of persons tried at Assizes and Quarter Sessions are persons who have not the means to pay for their own defence or who can only do so with the greatest difficulty.”\**

A generous estimate that as many as half the number of accused persons who appear without defence certificates are able to pay for their own solicitor and counsel, still leaves the figure of over 40 per cent. of those so tried who have to appear unrepresented at their trial for the more serious forms of crime.

The bulk of criminal charges are, of course, heard in the Courts of Summary Jurisdiction. They consist either of summary offences or indictable offences dealt with summarily. Summary offences are those which can only be tried by a petty sessional court consisting of magistrates.† In 1934 as many as 631,117 persons were charged with summary offences, of whom 592,027 were found guilty. In 1937 there were over 735,000 summary cases. Though many of these cases were comparatively unimportant, a large number were serious and in 1934 as many as 11,468 persons were sent to prison without the option of a fine after being convicted of summary offences.

In addition to these cases, in 1934 the Magistrates Courts (with the prisoners' consent) tried 51,436 (in 1937 over 45,000) indictable offences summarily instead of committing the accused for trial before a judge and jury. Over 80 per cent. of those charged with the more serious forms of crime are now tried by magistrates sitting without a jury.

What legal aid is given to the impoverished prisoner in the

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\*Haldane Society Report.

†Or Metropolitan Magistrates or, in some large towns, a Stipendiary.

court where he is most likely to be tried? The machinery for aid does exist. The Poor Prisoners' Defence Act provides that if it appears to a Court of Summary Jurisdiction or examining Justices that the means of a person charged before them with any offence are insufficient to enable him to obtain legal aid and that by reason of the gravity of the charge or of exceptional circumstances it is desirable, in the interests of justice, that he should have free legal aid in the preparation and conduct of his defence, the Court or Justices may grant him a legal aid certificate. The terms "gravity of the charge or of exceptional circumstances" are not explained or defined in the Act and complete discretion is given to the magistrates to interpret them.

Statistics show that in fact the Poor Prisoners' Defence Act is practically a dead letter in the Magistrates Courts, where its protection is most needed. In 1937, 780,397 cases were tried before the magistrates courts. Yet only 263 applications for legal aid were granted. 132 applications were refused. 52 unasked for certificates were given—a total of 315 certificates in over 780,000 cases—a proportion of 1 in about 2,500.

When Justices are considering whether to commit the accused for trial, the Act is used more often. In 1937, 429 applications for legal aid were granted, 136 refused and 77 offered unasked. The accused was sent for trial in 9,232 cases.

These figures speak for themselves. It is sufficient to quote the comment made by Sir Archibald Bodkin (Director of Public Prosecutions until 1930) :

"Legal aid might be more frequently granted both in serious summary cases and in indictable cases and I think that recent judicial strictures on Justices who had granted it even in a case where no legal answer to the charge was possible were unfortunate. Justices need not wait to be asked for a Certificate."

Why is this vital machinery allowed to rust? Partly because accused persons are ignorant of its existence. Prisoners who are remanded in custody are able to see printed on the wall of their cell a notice drawing the provisions of the Act to their attention. But no regular machinery has been devised for telling a man whose case is tried summarily or who is allowed bail, that he can receive free legal help.

Moreover, it often happens that a prisoner may believe



himself guilty when he has a defence—but through ignorance of the law pleads guilty without asking for legal aid (*e.g.* the statutory defence open in certain circumstances to a man charged with carnal knowledge of a girl under the age of 16 and over the age of 13).

The expense involved is a possible explanation of reluctance to use the Act. The costs of free legal aid are paid out of the funds of the local authority responsible for the prosecution. Justices who may be active in local politics may be loth to be reproached with extravagance. Time is another factor. Defended trials take longer than those undefended, while the presence of a solicitor or counsel for the defence is likely to prolong proceedings. It is not suggested that all magistrates are influenced by the excusable desire to get through their work quickly. But this factor does come into play in some of the over-burdened Courts.

Some magistrates take the view that they themselves will adequately look after the prisoner's interests and that legal representatives are for this reason superfluous. Before some Benches this is probably true. But however anxious a Bench may be to see that justice is done, magistrates elucidating the facts from the accused in open court cannot possibly have as adequate cognizance of the relevant facts as a solicitor discussing the case privately with the accused. Nor, in the interests of impartial justice, would it appear to be proper that magistrates should, by reason of the absence of legal representatives for the accused, turn themselves into counsel for the defence when their function is to consider impartially whether the facts before them justify beyond reasonable doubt a conviction.

What of criminal appeals? Here the position is rather more satisfactory. By the terms of the Act which founded it, the Court of Criminal Appeal may assign counsel, or solicitor and counsel, to an appellant whose means are insufficient, if it appears desirable in the interests of justice. The Registrar may also report to the Court cases in which it appears to him that legal aid ought to be assigned. Figures do not appear to be available as to the extent to which these powers are used, but it would appear that in most cases in which leave to appeal against conviction is granted, legal aid is also assigned if the appellant's

means warrant it. Legal aid is, however, rarely given in appeals against sentence only.

There are also appeals from the decisions of the Courts of Summary Jurisdiction to Quarter Sessions. In 1937 there were 884 of such appeals. 190 convictions or orders were quashed 134 Appeal Aid Certificates were granted and 130 refused to appellants. 10 Certificates were granted to Respondents and 2 refused.

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The recent resolution of the Associated Law Society of Wales and its Poor Persons Committee declining to deal with any "poor persons cases" after June 30th of this year unless certain reforms are granted, brings into relief the unsatisfactory machinery for legal aid in the civil courts. Thirty years ago a Chief Justice of the United States, Mr. Taft, said :—

"I believe that it is sufficiently in the interest of the public at large to promote equality between litigants, to take upon the Government much more than has already been done the burden of private litigation."

In Britain the State does not intervene in civil cases as it does in criminal trials and the gap between the "haves" and "have nots" remains unbridged. All that exists is a certain amount of organized professional charity in the High Court, and occasional unofficial charity in the Court which most concerns the majority of British people, the County Court.

This is not to decry the valuable work done by the Law Society in Civil Proceedings in the High Court, particularly in the Divorce Court, work whose scope may be judged by the estimate that 16,000 "poor persons" obtained a divorce during the 10 years ending 1936-7 by means of the Poor Persons Procedure.

By the Poor Persons Rules any prospective litigant with an income below £2 a week and worth less than £50 (in London £4 and £100), may apply to the Law Society of his district. If that body is satisfied that the applicant has reasonable grounds for initiating, defending, or being a party to Proceedings in the High Court, the applicant is granted the services of one of the solicitors and one of the counsel who have agreed to take such cases. The applicant pays for disbursements (witnesses expenses, *etc.*), and deposits £5 for this purpose, but counsel and

solicitor give their services free, and the State makes a contribution by remitting all Court fees.

For the litigant this system on the whole works satisfactorily. In a typical year, 1934, the number of poor persons proceedings commenced was 2,134. Poor persons were unsuccessful in 94 of these and successful in 1,848, of which 5 were in the Court of Appeal, 33 in the Chancery Division, 97 in the King's Bench Division, and the remaining 1,710 in the Divorce Court, whose work has been augmented since the passing of Mr. A. P. Herbert's Divorce Reform. For accident cases, however, the slow-moving Poor Persons Procedure is not generally considered satisfactory. The Approved Societies fill this gap for many people. Indeed, one of the earliest reforms required in this sphere is to equip the National Health Insurance system with a legal department comparable to the departments run by the Approved Societies. The Trades Unions and the hospitals, the Poor Man's Lawyer Centres, Associations of Pedestrians, Cyclists, etc., also provide some assistance, but, as the Haldane Society has reported, the great majority of poor persons who press their accident-claims do so through some semi-speculative or speculative solicitors. A contemporary Sam Weller could still find :—

" . . . them Dodson and Fogg as does these sort o' things on spec., as well as for the other kind and gen'rous people o' the same perfession as sets people by the ears free, gratis, for nothin', and sets their clerks to work to find out little disputes among their neighbours and acquaintances as vants settlin' by means o' law suits."

The Law Society, however, has issued rules to stop the practice whereby speculative solicitors obtained their clients from legal aid societies or claim assessors. And it should be noted that not all solicitors willing to run the risk of not recovering their costs by taking up a poor man's case are Dodsons and Fogs. Many solicitors have not the heart to turn away clients who patently need their help yet cannot afford to pay for it unless they succeed in their claim. In such cases the solicitors may either grant long credits or undertake the cases upon payment of out-of-pocket expenses only. Without assistance of this kind the lot of many a poor litigant bringing forward a serious claim, perhaps for damages for loss of a limb, would be a grave one indeed. It is not enough to drive out the speculative solicitor. Equally important is to provide the



people whom they hitherto have served (however ineffectively) with adequate legal aid.

Except for divorce cases and serious accident cases, poor persons comparatively rarely litigate in the High Court. The County Court is the poor man's court. And in this court no official provisions whatsoever exist for those without means to pay for it. The seriousness of this defect in our social services is increased by the fact that matters of immense importance to the parties concerned are adjudicated in the County Court. Judgments in Workmen's Compensation cases for instance may mean the difference between complete destitution and some provision, however inadequate, for an injured workman. So complicated is the law relating to Workmen's Compensation (the handbook most generally used by lawyers in connection with it runs to 1,000 pages) that the workman is virtually obliged to engage the services of a solicitor. The costs of conducting a Workmen's Compensation case amount to £50 or £60. Many solicitors, to protect themselves from having to pay the fees of Counsel and doctors, demand this sum from the workman before the case begins. Most workmen are unable to find £50. If they cannot, then, however deserving their case may be, no official assistance of any kind exists for them in the County Court.

Here again the Trades Unions and Friendly Societies play a vital rôle in assisting the poor litigant. Unofficial Charity has also done a little to mitigate the evil. There are in London and to a smaller extent in some of the larger provincial towns a number of places where lawyers sit regularly as "Poor Men's Lawyers" to give advice free to poor persons. Some of these are connected with settlements like Toynbee Hall, some with local political and religious organizations, some are independent. In addition there are such bodies as the "Bentham Committee" and the Society of "Our Lady of Good Counsel" which provide for legal assistance. Despite the fund of goodwill in these organizations and the hard work put in voluntarily by solicitors and counsel in connection with their work, they are unable to do more than scratch the surface of the problem of legal aid for those needing it but unable to pay for it.

## BOOTS AND QUENELLES—*A Story*

BY ERIC ALLEN

ONCE upon a time there was a certain foreign minister who was very fond of lobster quenelles. But the minister had a stomach, a fine large stomach which he carried around with him wherever he went, for no matter what the occasion or manner in which the foreign minister served his country he was always at some period in the proceedings called upon to make use of it. Through a ten-year campaign of banquets, balls and other minor beanfeasts it had gamely battled its way. Stormed at with oyster pâtés and zephyr of hare, bombarded by Russian timbales and blanquettes of sweetbreads, it had, nevertheless, lived to accompany its lord on his daily round of junketings and jamborees. A little jaded and wan, slave to the dread drug bicarbonate, it still stood up to the cunning onslaughts of the most diabolical of chefs. It complained, it rolled and roared with indignation at the unfair tactics of its enemies, but only when lobster quenelles hammered at its gates did it really lay down its arms. A pity this, the foreign minister always thought, for he really was exceedingly fond of lobster quenelles.

Now this story is not about the foreign minister, nor yet about that noble better half, his stomach. It is not even about lobster quenelles. It is the story of Petit Robert and how he won the war. But the lobster quenelles must come first. The Minister should have known better, of course. With a Cabinet meeting in the morning, which the journalists had already written up as one which would make world history, he would have been wise had he filled in the supper hour with a stroll through the Tuileries with, maybe, a café crème at the Rond Point. But were ministers wise the world would have no further need of them, for with their wisdom they would create a Utopia in which each man would be his own Premier and Parliament, and that,

as any cabinet minister will tell you, would be a most foolish thing to do. This minister, at any rate, though captain of his soul and master of his fate, was but a boy, and a greedy little dunce of a boy at that, in dealing with his stomach. That is why he let his mind be sponged clean of all thoughts of meetings or mornings at supper that night. History was due to be made on the morrow, but tonight let us live, he said. Let us eat, drink and be merry ; or never mind the wine and laughter ; two more plates of lobster quenelles will serve excellently instead.

Thinking it over later he decided that an infamous foreign Power, knowing his weakness for fresh boiled hen lobster pounded with butter, eggs and bread crumbs and served with a Provençal sauce, must have issued its instructions to the chef . . . or else ! But in the morning he could think of nothing but the inferno within him. A Note must be written, his Premier said, to this unruly foreign Power. A Stern Note, a Forthright Note, but one in which there must be far more jam than pill. Damn the Note, blast the foreign Power, thought the minister. Oh my poor stomach ! And with the feeble flame of his normal aversion fanned to a white-hot, heart-burning fury by great gusts of wind he sat down and inscribed a page of dyspeptic invective which would most certainly bring the foreigner's troops to his country's frontiers in a matter of hours. Dimly he realized it, but he did not care. Why should he be the only one to suffer ? And what did it matter ? Death, he was convinced, would have brought him release long before then, and death, at that moment, was the thing he desired before all else.

But his secretary took him in hand and poured into him glass after glass of a new and more potent brand of antacid. Slowly he struggled back to a point where life and death seemed of equal appeal, then past it, until finally he was washed ashore on great waves of foaming soda water. High and dry, and very much alive to his own stupidity, he grabbed for his telephone. With the sweat still cold on his brow he tried to take back his words. But the messenger, with that insane Note tucked safely into his portfolio, would by now be well on his way to the capital of the naughty foreign Power. If he could be caught before he reached the airport the minister would save his stomach



for further surfeits of lobster quenelles. But what a hope, with all roads cleared for the dashing official car. And there he must be left, one hand clutching his aching head, the other the telephone on which more than his life depended.

It is doubtful whether Petit Robert had ever heard of the foreign minister, but it is quite certain that the foreign minister had never heard of Petit Robert. How could he? Only once had his sumptuous Renault nosed its way down the market-stall lined street that was the highway of Petit Robert's home town, and then, its errhine organs offended by the stench of rotting vegetables and unwashed bodies, it had hurried along to the Bastille and the mass meeting at which its master was to speak. Both Petit Robert and the foreign minister were Parisians, but between the Bois and St. Paul there is a gulf that can only be bridged by something more solid than party programmes.

St. Paul is a bit of Bohemia. Not that Bohemia, though, where artists spend their days in daubing canvases with crude colour and their nights in painting the air of their favoured cafés in even brighter hues with their lurid talk. The Czechs and Slovaks who lodge there are far too busy quarrelling with the ever encroaching Poles to have heard of the liberties that have been taken with their country's name. But Petit Robert was not a Czech, or a Slovak, or a Pole. He was a Frenchman. A Frenchman of Paris. Once it had been hinted in his hearing that there were other cities. He had only laughed. What nonsense talk was this? Everybody knew that the world revolved around Paris and that the monument in the Place de la Bastille was the end of its axis sticking through.

He was a little man, not merely undersized, but stunted. A gnome, some wit had once described him, and a gnome he was. A little goblin man. And in the alleys between St. Antoine and the Seine they talked of changelings when he passed, and superstitious Slovak mothers frightened their children with tales of what Petit Robert might do if they were bad. He lodged at the top of an old house in the Rue de Charlemagne whose every room was a garret. A million weary feet had worn the stone stairs until any roystering Polak could return home drunk and yet remain erect as he toiled aloft. He had but to feel with his toes for the little hollows that marked the way.

The house was clean, as such houses go, but carbolic in the floor-washing water merely made a sickening melange with the stale unaired smell, and always from under one or another door a waft of sulphur would gossip of the hopeless battle against bugs. But the house had little to do with Petit Robert. He slept there, but his home was the restaurant Chez Albert in the Rue de André Croix.

One eats at Chez Albert for eight francs, wine and bread included. And one is fortunate to find a place at any popular hour. Up and down trots Françoise, still neat and trim after thirty years of serving at table, with eyes yet ready to shine at a compliment and a tongue still glad to toss around rude repartee. From table to service hatch, and back again. "*Deux haricots verts; une viande froide mayonnaise; un biftek, très saignant.*" One could hear her gruff voice with its broad Breton accent outbawling the clatter, and scrape, and hum, and rattle inside, long before Chez Albert's creaking door was reached. Forgetting orders, gossiping with old clients, she was as much an institution as the restaurant's famous *pâté de maison* itself. How she would chaff the old ones, and snub the young, but for one old friend she had nothing but courtesy and respect. She would fight to keep his corner table free and neglect the orders of the patron's friends to see that it was neatly spread with fresh white paper and fully furnished with soft new bread and brimming bottles of oil and vinegar.

It would be "*n'a plus de côté de veau*" to a dozen disappointed diners, but an order of this favourite piece would abracadabracally appear for Monsieur Robert when he arrived. He would tip-toe to hang his hat on the peg, always the same old well-brushed felt in winter and fantastically jaunty panama in summer, and under it his stick, or umbrella according to season. The little bag that held his table napkin was embroidered with his name in crooked, girlish stitches by the faithful Françoise. She would linger as she handed it to him, but his beady little eyes would already be on the *carte*. Moodily he would stare at it and as moodily eat his way through what was placed before him. He would stare into his empty plate, puffing out his ruddy cheeks like a pair of shiny pippins, as though searching behind it for the secret of the Universe.

When the adolescent body of Petit Robert decided to halt on the road to manhood his brain also gave up growing. He was not unintelligent. It was just that his mind remained the immature organ of a boy. He would talk of this and that to his few casual intimates, and read his *Paris Soir*, but always with a child's conception of all that was said or written. But he was no fool. When they chaffed him, drawing him out on subjects beyond his grasp, he would get angry. His little fist would pound the table and his black brows descend in a fearful scowl. But then, suddenly, he would shoot a glance from under them at his tormenters, and in it there would be a laugh. He did not begrudge them their fun. He was an institution there too, like Françoise and the *pâté de maison*, and if they got the better of him in arguments, he scored when it came to the question of food and service.

In the intervals between forgetting orders and serving *bière* instead of *vin blanc* Françoise would keep one bright eye on the table in the corner. Saying nothing she would divert some wag's mind from his butt by carefully spilling his *bouillon* over his knees or upsetting the salt in his carrot Vichy. Only one thing would press her sharp tongue into service on his behalf. When the position of France in the affairs of the world was discussed, Petit Robert would fling down his knife and fork and rush to his country's aid. There was a great lout with a wall eye who professed Communism, but drove up on Mondays and *fête* days in a well preserved Citroen. "France is finished", was his theme, "and a good thing too", he would add as a sub-head for the enragement of Petit Robert. Then those little black beads would sparkle with tears of impotent rage, and his tiny feet would stamp. There would be no laughter behind the scowl, only the agony of a soul in torment as his puny mind strained after the arguments that would not come.

What did Françoise care that in his passion for his beloved France her Monsieur Robert had no affection left for any other supplicant? She would whip round on the bully and tell him to find a box and a spot for it on some ghetto street corner for talk of that kind. Only Frenchmen were served at Chez Albert. Then the clouds on Petit Robert's face would drift away. He would nod to himself, and turn to his dinner, with never a smile



or a word for his champion. But she did not mind. He could not escape without a word to her, for they had a little game which they played each night. Monsieur Robert would push aside his cheese plate, drain his glass of watered wine, and wait. Françoise would bustle by without a glance. Miniature hands clasped before him, his shoulders hunched, and his eyes busy on their perpetual search for the answer to things, he would sit there for a minute without moving. Then his eye would search out Françoise's and with a look of incredible slyness he would exclaim: "My *café nature*, Françoise! You have forgotten it again". And she would "tut" happily and clatter off to fetch it. They were still lovers, she and Monsieur Robert. Only when he pushed back his chair at once when he had finished eating and reached for his hat without waiting for the post-prandial ceremony did she know that she had offended in some way.

And then there came a crisis in the affairs of France. Some haughty foreign Power had been speaking out of turn. The papers were full of it. Tomorrow a cabinet meeting had been called that would change the history of the world. Did they not say so, here in the *Soir* and in *Le Matin* too? They knew, these newspaper men. But all would be well. The destiny of France was in safe hands. Her ministers were wise. There would be no war. But what if there was? Had they not all served their time? Were they not all ready to fight tomorrow? Tonight, if necessary, even though they would sooner first finish up their confiture or fruit.

"*Alors, Robert*", they called, "and what of you? Will you fight for France?"

"Fight", answered Chez Albert's communist. "How can he? They have no boots big enough for such a giant to march in".

Françoise flashed from hot to cold as she watched Robert leave his plate and slink out into the street, but neither she nor anybody broke the silence through which he edged his way. Albert himself, broad and bovine, was the first to speak. He walked from behind his bar over to the taunter's table and said one word: "Out". And then four more: "And don't come back". It was a record. For years Albert had given his oldest client no more than a nod and a smile. But even the

knowledge that Jupiter had hurled his thunderbolt in the cause of right did not dispel the atmosphere of wrong that hung around.

Petit Robert patronized Chez Albert at noon as well as night. Ten minutes past twelve was his time to amble up to his corner. But that next morning he was late. Quarter past ; twenty past ; half past. Still no Petit Robert. And then old Foucauld wheezed in with the news. The car had been travelling fast, but Robert had stepped out from safety without a glance at the road. The driver could not be blamed. " Poor little fellow " he had said. " He seemed to be in a kind of trance ". And the owner of the car, too, had been very kind. He was hurrying somewhere on important business, but he had insisted that his own car rushed Robert to the hospital while he himself continued in a taxi. But Françoise did not want to hear all this. One thing only mattered. She asked it. " No ". Old Foucauld wagged his grey head. " He did not recover consciousness. *Pauvre Petit Robert !* "

Chez Albert is not the same now. For a week its little goblin man chased all other subjects from the minds of its regulars. Even the fact that war had been averted and the crisis proved to be a bubble took second place as a conversational topic. There was some talk of ducking the communist in the Seine, but the project remained such through lack of a leader to turn it into action. And then, when that was over, and St. Paul had subscribed its sous and walked behind the pitiful little box to the burial ground, they all expected a return to normal. Vaguely they were disappointed. Françoise rarely smiled now and was likely to snap back a tart rejoinder to any remark unessential to the important business of eating and drinking. And the table in the corner. They shunned it, and the stranger seating himself there came away with the definite impression that Chez Albert was a most unfriendly house.

The children around St. Paul are glad that their lives have one bogey less to scare them, but they miss Petit Robert too. It was fun to risk the unthinkable horrors which might follow when they called after him in the streets. Only the old house in the Rue de Charlemagne accepts his passing without concern. Grown use to sordid vice and hopeless misery it finds nothing in

the death of a little undersized moron to rock its foundations. And another who lost no sleep through the little man's sudden exit was the lobster-loving minister. He had never even heard of Petit Robert, but it was most fortunate for the future well-being of his stomach that the messenger carrying that naughty Note had been delayed so long by the business of knocking the little man down with his car, and picking him up again to rush him to hospital, that it was possible for that folly to be snatched back out of the flying plane into the fire.



## THE CINEMA IN EUROPE

BY FRANK CLEMENTS

NOWHERE in Europe, not even in the most developed areas, and great capitals, has cinema-going become the wide-spread, almost automatic custom that it has in this country and the United States. The cynic would be tempted to attribute this to the higher standard of intelligence on the continent, and up to a point he would be correct, for presumably the greater the variety of easily available recreations the greater the standard of culture and the higher the general level of intelligence. For, whereas in England, the cinema has almost a monopoly of cheap entertainment, all over Europe it has to face the competition of the state supported theatre and opera, the cheap concerts, the cafes with their orchestras and that frugal habit common to nearly all continentals of parading in the main street, bowing to acquaintances with stately grace and blocking the sidewalk by gesticulating in delirious harmony with a group of passing friends.

Climate also plays a *rôle*, especially in the extreme north and in the south. Rain is the great friend of the picture-house, rain and drab, overcrowded, furtively dark streets. In the north the summer is too short for most people to wish to lose a minute of it away from the strands and rivers or the woods and mountains, which lie within the immediate reach of Oslo, Stockholm, Helsingfors and Tallinn (Reval); and the cold winters call the young people out to the sports with snow or ice and keep the older ones in by their stoves and steaming grog. In the South, people are still uncivilized enough to prefer the breezes and soft evenings below an open sky to the scientifically conditioned air of a cinema.

Moreover, a far higher proportion of Europeans live or work in close contact with the land or in those small towns where the inhabitants retire to rest only a short while after the equally

stolid and contented cattle. The cinema is a too artificial and sophisticated product ever to be at home near the soil ; it offers essentially a substitute life, a dream world, and those people who live hard and in a vivid—if restricted—world of their own, have neither the time nor interest to spare for those unreal problems, peculiar to gangsters' girl friends and suburban housewives.

A contributory factor to the comparative lack of popularity of the cinema in Europe is certainly therefore the character of many American films, for these everywhere, except in France, Germany, Finland, the Baltic States and Italy enjoy a very strong position which approaches dominance. The Industry in the States pays small attention to the needs of the export market even to the peculiarities of those countries, such as Great Britain which are fortunate enough to share the same language. Because of the link of a common language, Americanization is more advanced here, but even so the great majority of American films achieve no brilliant success but are merely sufficiently understandable and tolerable not to drive the habit-drugged public away from the picture-houses.

The advent of the talking film was in some ways disadvantageous to the cinema in Europe. Except in Germany and France, the great majority of films shown have to be imported, and the foreign dialogue has either to be translated by sub titles thrown across the bottom of the screen, or substituted by a dubbed text in the local tongue. The Americans usually employ dubbing for France and for such films as are shown in Germany, but in spite of the technical advances made, and the ingenuity with which phrases are made to fit lip movements, dubbing must always remain an unsatisfactory process. The natural inflections of, for example, the French language in certain situations, too often conflict blatantly with the gestures and expression of a man talking American.

However, it is still perhaps preferable to the use of sub-titles. Not only do these spoil the pictorial quality of the film—in Helsingfors, for example, the titles are in both Finnish and Swedish, so that one has to peer through a barrage of lettering to see what is going on—but they constantly divert the eyes of the audience and thus prevent it from obtaining that complete

absorbition which, for most people, is essential to the enjoyment of a film. Then, as most of the sound in talking pictures is made up of dialogue, talkies, when they leave their own linguistic area, become little more than poor silent pictures.

So much for what might be described as the natural conditions affecting the cinema. The screen also comes strongly under the influence of political considerations. State censorship is everywhere imposed; the public itself can either weaken or strengthen the effect of censorship by imposing a boycott of its own on political or racial grounds; because of the vast importance of the film as a medium of propaganda, governments actively assist their making with no regard to commercial and often small regard to æsthetic requirements.

The censorship varies greatly in all countries. In Scandinavia and Holland it is mainly based on moral principles, but already in Sweden, for example, there is a clause against films "which may be unsuitable with regard to relations with foreign countries". The new type of American film such as the "Confessions of a Nazi Spy" receives short shrift generally on the continent. The most liberal governments are now compelled to pay due regard to the susceptibilities of foreign powers, although in many of the democratic countries, particularly in Norway, official bans are avoided by the existence of a large number of private and club cinemas (Norway has nearly two hundred) where every type of film is shown.

No such possibility exists under the various forms of totalitarian *régimes* which abound on the continent, however, and here, in addition, the political censorship is much more stringently imposed. In Bulgaria, the extent of the censorship can be assessed by the composition of the censoring committee, which is made up of representatives of the cinema owners, the Church and the Ministries for Public Education, Interior, War, and Foreign Affairs. In most of such countries, there is, as in Poland, an absolute ban on films from Russia. In Germany and also less stringently in Italy, films are also banned in which Jews play a conspicuous *rôle* as actors, as producers, as technicians or even as owners. (However, by some ingenious methods best known to himself, Mr. Samuel Goldwyn, has



managed to ensure that MGM are the most generally shown and the most popular American films in Germany).

As a whole, the political censorship works in favour of the American and French films at the expense of the German, although the advantage must be slight, and will be lost, as far as the United States are concerned, if there is any increase in the tendency to make films based on political events from a partisan point of view. In Scandinavia, Holland, Switzerland, France and Poland, it is German films which are most likely to be forbidden or extensively cut on the grounds of political tendentiousness; in Estonia and Roumania the political censorship, one might say, breaks even; elsewhere it is more likely to work to Germany's advantage.

The influence of the Church on cinema censorship is particularly strong in Poland, Roumania, Spain, Portugal and Holland, and, although the Catholic Faith, dominant in three of these countries, is hostile to much of the new German outlook, this religious censorship nevertheless tends to react more unfavourably on the French and American film. This is understandable for many American films are, if made with due regard to puritan standards, frankly pagan in outlook (and anything duller than puritanical paganism has yet to be seen). Even when it does its best to 'get the religious vote' the American film often unwittingly offends; in many of the still strongly Christian countries it is found improper for any form of religious service to be pictured on the screen, and the local conception of the dignity and status of the priesthood hopelessly conflicts with the American and to some extent the British idea of the social parson or muscular Christian, both of whom are given undue prominence in American films.

It is again American films which suffer most heavily from what might be described as social censorship. Crime films, horror films and the like, which are made almost exclusively in the States tend more and more to be forbidden everywhere, not only for exhibition to children, but also for adult audiences.

Before leaving the subject of censorship, it is interesting to see that the system of "A" and "U" classification has been generally adopted. Although the guiding principle is roughly the same everywhere, the application varies. In Bulgaria

children may not attend any cinema performances except those specifically licensed for the juvenile population ; in Sweden the ban in theory works on much the same lines as in this country but in practice it is more rigidly and conscientiously employed.

Private or group as distinct from official, opinion influences films and cinema attendance mainly in those countries where political feeling is high or where there is imminent danger from over the frontiers. In Norway and other countries whose political tendency is towards the left, German films have to overcome considerable prejudice among most of the population ; especially in Denmark and Finland, this feeling is stronger in the rural areas than in the large towns. In Poland and Jugoslavia and similar countries, it is the threat of aggression rather than a belief in democracy that has given rise to anti-German feeling which automatically militates against the success of German films.

Government intervention or assistance on behalf of national film industries has not greatly affected the aspect of the cinema in Europe except in Germany and Italy. In most countries, preferential treatment is afforded home films, and in addition legislation is often introduced, as in Great Britain, to make the exhibition of a certain number of locally produced films compulsory. However, except for the Swedish film, which has always maintained high standards, the quality of most of these "quota" movies is lamentable. In Copenhagen cinemas showing one of the rare Danish films are visited only by those staunch citizens whose patriotism is always with them, and those critics and such of the brighter youth who go to raise a jeer.

But German state intervention has been much more successful. There was, however, always a flourishing film industry, both in Germany and Austria (and a creditable one in Czecho-Slovakia) so that the essential machinery to implement a film drive already existed. At the beginning, state interference with German films was catastrophic in its effects on their popularity and prestige both within and without the German frontiers. These were the days of what might be described as the "Stormtrooper Max Era", when the German cinema world was made up of the marching feet, stern nordic scowls and waving banners of the Nazi Conquerors, and the panic-stricken scurryings, low and

scruffy machinations and ignominious defeats of the Evil System.

This commendable exuberance was soon checked when its results on receipts became visible. It must be remembered that Germany's films bring her in an appreciable amount of the so much desired Devisen, and are furthermore a valuable way of paying off the blocked credits which such countries as Hungary and Yugo-Slavia have frozen in Germany. As was revealed recently in the Southern Tyrol, compromise with Italy, Germany is no less loath than any other Power to sacrifice her vaunted ideals and theories when political or economic interest is to be served.

To-day, the German film industry makes the closest study of the requirements of its best foreign markets, and since it was discovered after an exhaustive enquiry by German agents in every country in Europe that politically tendentious films were neither popular with the public, nor likely to pass unscathed through the censor, the proportion of German films which have any political colouring whatsoever is remarkably small. A few films, of course, are still made entirely for German consumption, and although these are no longer as crude as the earlier Nazi films, their propaganda content is still obvious, so obvious in fact that they defeat their own purpose, even with the propaganda saturated German public.

Germany has copied America's favourite trick for increasing the popularity of her films abroad, that is by offering foreign Stars very attractive contracts to make films in Germany. The name of the famous Swedish actress Zarah Leander is sufficient to draw large crowds to the cinema, not only throughout Scandinavia, but in the Baltic and even to some extent in the Balkan countries. For some years now she has been making films in Germany. The second highly successful method is to place the scene of the films in one of the desired markets and to make the heroes, for example, Spaniards or Hungarians, and to place them and their national culture in a very favourable light. Germany is even more scrupulously careful in the choice of nationality for her villains than the magnates of California. A large number of them seem to come from vaguely identified islands off the coast of South America, and the remainder are



for the most part Russians, either the smoothly cynical type of the pre-War era, or the hairy rascally Bolshies.

So much for the feature films. The short cultural or informative films are very popular in Europe, and in many countries such as Germany and Estonia their inclusion in every programme is made compulsory. It is in this field that even the smallest of States make some effort at production, and in this field only that the English film has any reputation at all on the Continent, and where the American film has a small market. These films hardly ever come under the ban of any of the various forms of censorship already discussed, and they are, moreover, a most potent means of indirect propaganda, in that by implication they all pay tribute to the scenic beauty, scientific achievement or the social progress of the land making and exporting them. Germany has exploited this aspect to the full, and her short films are particularly effective as tourist propaganda. One way in which she ensures that they will be widely marketed is by the working of an exchange system with, shall we say, Estonia. The Estonians see the technically brilliant films portraying the glories of Dresden or the grandeur of the Bavarian Alps, and go to Germany for their holidays. Even if Germany exhibited the Estonian films she takes in exchange, there would, because of the currency restrictions, be no danger of German audiences making for the beauties of Tallinn on their holidays.

The third type of film, and the one which often makes the most effective direct propaganda of all, is the news reel, and over this an open battle is being fought in all countries in Europe. Although the reputation of infallibility which the printed word enjoyed is declining, the majority of people still believe that the camera cannot lie, especially when it is depicting actual events. The news reels of every country in Europe nowadays are made with predominant regard to their value as propaganda. There are two main ways in which their distribution can be achieved. Firstly, the whole news reel will so to speak be supplied neat to cinema owners either favourably disposed towards, or in the pay, or under the control of the foreign Government concerned. (Also German Companies such as UFA themselves own cinemas abroad, like that palatial building that must be known to every visitor to Amsterdam). Secondly, news shots of particular

events will be supplied either free or at an entirely nominal price to distributive film companies in the smaller lands, who will incorporate these shots in their news reels and thus even further increase their propaganda value in that their country of origin is not given and that they appear under the local trade mark.

Although the increase in the propaganda content of this country's news reels has been obvious for some time, the commercial companies concerned still prefer to devote most of their footage to the most distressing trivialities such as the wedding of an earl's second cousin in a country vicarage, or a competition for the shapeliest ankles in Brighton. Moreover, the little material of ours which is exported to meet the overwhelming demand for English news, often lamentably fails to achieve the desired effect. I remember once, for example, I forget where it was, but think probably in Hungary, I saw a news reel which was devoted entirely to the war preparations of the various Powers. For three or four minutes we were regaled with solid ranks of prancing Italians, and trotting Bersiglieri; there followed a few rather crummy shots of some Arabs on camels taken at some function in French Morocco; this hardly impressive scene faded to give place to some crushingly imposing pictures of German planes and tanks in close formation, blocking the screen for what seemed to be about six minutes. To round this off neatly and to point the moral home, there followed an inspection in Hyde Park of a few bowler hatted gentlemen and sturdy females who—although their precise function was not stated—afforded in this programme the only and not over adequate pictorial representation of Britain's armed might.

The effect of this on foreign audiences, particularly those well-disposed towards England can easily be imagined. The vast amount of goodwill that can be capitalized, however, does occasionally receive an opportunity to demonstrate itself. In Belgrade I witnessed a similar "news" film, only this time it was devoted to the leaders of these four countries. We had Mussolini's chin filling half the screen and his eyes bleaching the landscape, while what looked like millions of his enthusiastic followers deafened us with their shouts; there followed a short

picture of Monsieur Daladier, with a cigarette dangling from his lip and with the pathetic hunted expression in his eyes of a man who is dying to smoke but cannot find a match ; then we had Mr. Chamberlain, not looking at his best on a rainy day in Downing Street. Of course the umbrella raised its laugh, but much more surprising was the spontaneous applause which broke out and lasted the whole time the Prime Minister was on the screen, and it contrasted most oddly with the complete silence which greeted the arrival of Herr Hitler and the beaming bevy of S.S. men.

This last scene should show more clearly than anything else not only the urgent necessity of this country establishing a truly representative and enterprising film industry, but also the avidity with which any signs of British effort is welcomed where public opinion is still free to express itself, and finally the valuable and constructive achievement which such an industry could ensure not only on behalf of Great Britain, but on behalf of the causes for which this country and her Allies are making a stubborn stand.



## THE ROUMANIAN PEASANTRY

BY HUGH SETON-WATSON

**M**ORE than four-fifths of the Roumanian people are peasants. Thirty years ago the great majority of these were landless labourers working on the estates of Roumanian, Hungarian or Russian landlords. Although no longer bound to the soil by law, they were economically dependent on their employer, and had no semblance of political freedom. In 1918 this situation was transformed by the Land Reforms, which divided up the estates of the great aristocratic families, and gave them to their cultivators. Not only the foreign rulers, but the Roumanian boyars themselves, suffered from the reform. It was the most radical and democratic measure undertaken in Eastern Europe since the war, and although a certain amount of obstruction and evasion prevented it from being fully executed, it undoubtedly transformed, within a brief period, the property structure of rural society.

Unfortunately it solved nothing. New economic difficulties arose in the post-war years. The smallholders had no capital, no means to buy agricultural machines, and no knowledge of scientific methods of exploitation. The birth-rate is high in Roumania, and the small estates, divided between the sons on the death of the owner, were split into ever smaller fractions, still less rentable than the original property. Those who had means, indebted themselves in order to buy cattle or implements. When the World Crisis broke, from 1932 onwards, the catastrophic fall of agricultural prices increased two or three times the burden of the debts. At the same time the cost of industrial goods rose in relation to agricultural products, and it became more and more difficult to pay taxes. Under the pressure of these new difficulties many were obliged to sell their land to their creditors. Those who had only two or three hectares of land to sell were compelled to eat less and to sell an increasing proportion of their small crop to acquire money with which to pay debts or taxes.

It is impossible to say with confidence what is the present property structure of Roumanian agriculture. The census of 1930, whose accuracy is not entirely certain, revealed that 74.9% of all holdings were of less than 5 hectares, and represented 28% of the land, while .4% of all holdings were of more than 100 hectares, and represented 27.7% of the land. These figures were collected before the Agricultural Crisis became severe. The process which has been described, became intense only after 1932. To-day it is certain that the number of very small and of very large properties has increased. Probably more than 80% of peasant properties have less than 5 hectares. It is generally accepted that one hectare per member of a family is a minimum for subsistence. Families are large in Roumania, the number of children being rarely less than three and often as many as seven, while ten or twelve are not exceptional. This means that in more than 80% of peasant households at least one member of the family is unemployed, or every member is only partially employed.

Conditions vary from region to region. The richest soil is to be found in the southern and eastern parts of the country. In Banat, where the frontiers of Jugoslavia, Roumania and Hungary meet, the peasants are rich. Large properties did not play a big part before the war, there is a tradition of medium holdings, and families are small. Having attained a certain level of prosperity, the peasants limit the number of their children, and most have a good prospect of a decent life. In Wallachia conditions are different. Here big estates still exist, or have been reconstituted. Either the original boyar has recovered his former lands, or a merchant or rich peasant has succeeded in forcing his debtors to sell to him. Prosperous and medium peasant holdings are rare. Most have small strips incapable of rational development and inadequate for their families. They are obliged to work for others during part of the year for a wage. A growing proportion have no land at all. They earn from 400 to 700 lei (5/- to 10/-) a month and some coarse food. Some find no work at all. The worst conditions are in Bessarabia, where competent economists have calculated that 80% of the peasants are a proletariat and 50% of the labour power of the villages is superfluous.

In Transylvania there is greater variety. In the south the land is very poor. The villages lie beneath the mountains, and the inhabitants gain their living from pasturing sheep. Here live the richest peasants of Roumania, a rural bourgeoisie, whose sons visit universities and become professors, doctors, officers and even ministers. In the centre of Transylvania, and in the plain of Bukovina, the soil is fertile, good crops are grown, and the percentage of prosperous medium holdings is higher. In the mountains west of Cluj (Muntii Apuseni) and in the northern province of Maramures the most terrible poverty of all exists. Some work as labourers in state or private forests. Others are able to find employment in industry. Most are forced to wander throughout the country, selling wooden planks or simple tools loaded on primitive carts drawn by emaciated horses. These pilgrimages, which last for weeks, bring them a little money with which to buy the maize which forms their only food. Their tiny wooden hovels are of a squalor probably without parallel in contemporary Europe. But they have the finest physical type and keenest intelligence of all Roumanian peasants.

Propaganda directed from countries unfriendly to Roumania has tried to spread in Western Europe the belief that Roumanians are degenerate, cowardly and dishonest. This propaganda exploits every scandal from Bucarest and represents it as typifying Roumanian "national morals". Yet the first visit to a Roumanian village will show the Western observer the stupidity of such tales. The Roumanian peasant is at least the equal in physique, courage, intelligence and honesty, of his Serbian, Magyar, Bulgarian or Polish colleagues. Yet it must be said that this splendid material has often been wasted. If the economic development of recent years has increased the hardships of the Roumanian peasant, his political experience has not been encouraging.

The Land Reform was carried through after the war by the Liberal Party. This party represented in the old Kingdom the rising commercial class, the small gentry and the bourgeoisie. Its traditional rival, the Conservative Party, represented the great land-owning aristocracy. The Liberals introduced the Land Reform and Universal Suffrage in order to destroy the economic and political power of their opponents who, in the



chaotic situation of the time, were obliged to accept them. The Liberals, however, were not moved by love for the peasants, as their subsequent policy showed. Until 1928, whether in or out of office, the Liberals ruled the country. Their economic policy was based on the principle of making the peasant pay for the industrialization of the towns. Export duties were raised on agricultural products, no attempt was made to give the new peasant owners cheap credit or technical instruction, and political freedom was falsified by corruption and pressure at the elections.

Opposition to this *régime* came from two sides. The National Party, led by Iuliu Maniu, representing the Roumanian bourgeoisie and peasantry of Transylvania, opposed the economic dictatorship of Bucarest, while at the same time insisting on the unity of Great Roumania and denouncing any tendency towards separatism. In the old Kingdom a Peasant Party was founded in 1918 by Ion Michalache, which soon won mass support at the elections. In 1926 these two groups united to form the National Peasant Party. Great meetings and demonstrations were organized in different parts of the country. The movement took on an increasingly revolutionary character. In 1928 the Regency called Maniu to power. Free elections were then held and gave a majority of over 75% to the National Peasant Party. Great hopes were raised that a genuine democracy would be established, and that a new and honest administration would introduce economic reforms desired by the majority of the people.

These hopes were disappointed. The new administration was honest, and made important changes. But before it had had time to fulfil its programme the world depression broke it. Maniu had already resigned in 1930, and under the succeeding governments the party split, for reasons which are still obscure, into smaller groups and factions. In the elections of 1933 the Liberals returned to power. The years from 1933 to 1938 form a third period, marked by the rise of the Iron Guard. This party was led by discontented intellectuals of middle class families. It was particularly strong among university students and orthodox priests, and it had some support in military quarters. A section of the commercial bourgeoisie, jealous of

the commercial strength of the Jewish bourgeoisie, was attracted by its Anti-Semitism. At the same time great industrialists, and not only those of "Aryan" origin, gave it support as an instrument against any Left movement. Moreover, it received funds from abroad. Yet all this would not have given it importance if it had not been able to win mass support among the desperate peasants who, disillusioned with all political parties and crushed by the misery of the economic crisis, which no politician had done much to alleviate, looked to a revolutionary movement led by new men with courage and no compromising past. Since many village usurers are Jews, anti-Semitism was a means of canalizing this formless discontent, and was combined with the Radical slogan "One man, one acre" which, though quite insincere, had a remarkable effect.

Roumania was exposed to great danger when King Carol proclaimed his dictatorship in February, 1938, and for the following eight months the danger continued. Although it is probable that even before the elections of December, 1937, the Iron Guard was to some extent in decline, it did not abandon its terroristic activities, which reached their highest point in the weeks following the King's return from London in November, 1938. This state of affairs was ended by the Minister of the Interior, Armand Calinescu. For the last months the Iron Guard has been vigorously repressed. Its organization has been destroyed, and its remaining prominent leaders arrested. As a mass movement it no longer exists, although in intellectual circles its principles still enjoy sympathy.

The Government has not contented itself with repression. It is aware that the cause of the success of the Iron Guard's demagogy, and the main problem of Roumania, is the misery of the peasant and the enormous contrast in wealth and psychology between the towns, particularly Bucarest, and the villages. With the hope of bridging this gulf, the Government, inspired by the well-known Roumanian sociologist, Professor Gusti, has created the Social Service. This organization is intended to include all existing cultural, economic and social bodies engaged in work of benefit to the peasants. The aim is to create in every village a building known as a Cultural Hearth, which will serve as the centre of social life. Model properties

will be organized to show the peasants how scientific methods can improve productivity. They will be able to obtain selected seeds and agricultural machines cheaply, and to use the communal bulls and stallions for the breeding of a higher quality of livestock. Special efforts will be made to preserve and develop their national art and music. Books will be provided by communal libraries, and the village priest will collaborate in the work of "spiritual elevation". At the same time University and High School students are compelled to spend a year in work of research in the villages, under expert guidance, and necessary roads and buildings are constructed by military conscripts.

This ambitious programme deserves respect. But there seem to the writer to be two grave dangers. The economic misery, from which the Roumanian peasant suffers, has causes too complicated and too profound to be cured rapidly. Reforms will inevitably take time for their realization, and in the interval patience and sacrifices will be required of the peasant. If the peasant understands the policy of his government, if he has an opportunity to exert political influence, if he can see what difficulties prevent sudden changes, if he feels that the ministers are his representatives, and that their mistakes are his mistakes, then he will accept the necessity of sacrifice. But if he has no influence, if everything is done from above, if no explanations are given to him, but only fine promises, if his only contact with the Government is through the gendarme and the tax-collector, and if meanwhile no visible change in his conditions takes place, he will become sceptical or even hostile. Either economic prosperity or political freedom can be sacrificed, but loss of both is hard to bear.

The second danger is yet more fundamental. All the measures proposed by the Social Service can be of the utmost value to medium peasant holders, who have enough land to use modern methods of production, but who have been unable hitherto to exploit them rationally for lack of credit facilities which they are now receiving. At present, with the exception of certain regions mentioned, only the big estates are economically sound. If the present agricultural policy achieves its object, medium properties too will be made rentable. But, as we have seen.



80% of the peasant holdings are of less than five hectares and 50% of less than three hectares. For these there is little more to be hoped from the new policy than from the old. The present Minister of Agriculture, Cornateanu, is known to be an admirer of the German agricultural policy which, founded on the *Erbhofgesetz* of 1934, aims at creating a peasant aristocracy of owners of from 7 to 125 hectares, consciously condemning the rest of the rural population to the rank of a proletariat. Even if the lower limit were reduced from 7 to 3 hectares for Roumania, more than half of the peasant population would be excluded.

Inadequately employed by their properties, the peasants are compelled to work for part or all of the year in forest, mine or factory. But whereas in the Third Reich the surplus excluded from agriculture can be easily absorbed in the industrial machine, in Roumania industry, despite recent progress, is quite inadequate. Moreover, German influence is used to retard industrialization, and in 1938 the specialized German economic press conducted a campaign against industrialization in the South-Eastern States of Europe, whose destiny is to be agrarian and mining colonies within the German *Grossraumwirtschaft*.

The beneficial effects of the expansion of German trade on the peasant population have been exaggerated. Not only are the majority excluded but, already poor, they are threatened, in case of German domination, with a further fall of their standard of life. Politically, German domination is even less attractive. The Iron Guard won popularity, not for its devotion to Germany, but for its demagogic social programme. The treatment of Czechoslovakia, and above all the recent support of Hungarian designs, disillusioned most Roumanian supporters of the Reich. It is extremely unlikely that in the event of war with Roumania German propaganda could achieve big results among the Roumanian peasants. At the same time economic discontent is widespread. To what extent it is taking political form, it is impossible to say. Political groups exist, of every variety of opinion, from Left to Right. But the majority of the peasant population are probably politically indifferent. They hope that the Government will help them, but they do not know how to make their wishes felt.

## EBB AND FLOW

BY STEPHEN GWYNN

SIR Thomas Inskip conveys the impression that he is a good natured man and perhaps simple kindness of heart led him to assure a local audience in Scotland that war was not coming. He may have been surprised by the number of rings which went circling out from this splash in a little pond ; so unlike the speeches with which Lord Halifax and Mr. Chamberlain said a brief goodbye to Lords and Commons. Lord Halifax was at his best, which is very good ; his temper was perfect, with not a trace of frayed nerves. Mr. Chamberlain has not the same happiness of manner, but his outspoken utterance on the day when the House rose made amends for some regrettable lapses in an earlier debate as to the length of recess. He did then, what perhaps he might have done before ; he took the House and the country frankly into his confidence. An immense chessboard spreads out its problems day and night before him and not even the resources of Great Britain permit him to take a high hand in answer to menace at all points on the board. He has admitted quite frankly that the attitude which he is constrained to assume in the Far East revolts his pride as an Englishman. Those who, since Munich, distrust him are inclined to hold that because he seeks, even at the cost of prestige, to avoid a clash with Japan, he will be found equally pliable in Europe. Yet the plain meaning of his speech on August 4 (a significant date) was that British power reserved its full strength so that commitments in Europe could be met without compromise. A choice has been made and it is fair to Mr. Chamberlain, and fair to the British people, that it should be understood what the choice is. In China, Great Britain has vast commercial and financial interests ; three hundred millions at stake. In Europe, Great Britain is pledged to defend Poland, Roumania and Greece against the

possible aggression of a usurping power. She is pledged to co-operate up to the very limits of her strength in defence of freedom. That interest has been put before the interest of finance and of commerce. Certainly it is not only to defend the freedom of other European States that Mr. Chamberlain has committed Great Britain with the full approval of the British people. Their own freedom is threatened, and with it, no doubt, their prosperity. But freedom and decent order against the pretensions of violent force have been put before business interests.

There are probably no two men living who have more dislike of war than the Prime Minister and his Foreign Secretary; but it would be a very ill-advised ruler who believed that this dislike would hold them back from using the immense preparations which have been made, and continue to be made, or from playing their full part in the league which they have taken the lead in forming. So far as Poland is concerned, they have repeatedly declared that Poland shall be the judge when assistance is to be given. This has not been made equally plain about Roumania and Greece, but the same guarantee is implied. If it seems less likely to be called for there, that is because the joint action of England and France has brought in the formidable support of Turkey. But no candid observer can deny that Great Britain has undertaken vast risks, to the admitted damage of some of the greatest sources of her wealth.

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What Mr. Chamberlain refrained from saying about matters in China is worth noting. Japan's proceedings are resented in America in the United States as they were resented in Great Britain; and President Roosevelt, acting of his own initiative, but with immediate approval from the American people, has terminated a treaty, which was of commercial value to Japan. Mr. Chamberlain might take similar action and has not taken it. He will be blamed in America for allowing the prestige and position of the white race to suffer by his toleration of indignities, at which he himself says that the blood boils. But his hands are not free, because of the European commitments to which he has given priority; and since he is not in a position to use all the resources of British



power to protect British subjects in the Far East, he feels bound to avoid any policy which may add to their dangers and difficulties. Injury, even loss of life, to British subjects might help his policy ; but he has not the dictatorial ruthlessness, and avows that he is unwilling to jeopardize individuals. He did not say, but his words plainly implied, that if the prestige and the interests of the white race are to be defended against Japanese aggression, they cannot be defended by Great Britain only. Joint economic action which would cut off from Japan vital markets both of supply and of export would probably lead to war ; and the possibility of a British fleet acting in Far Eastern waters was named, without emphasis but significantly. Yet in fact the chances of its acting in isolation, or only with French support, are negligible. The other possibility could only be brought about by some flagrant unwisdom of the Japanese military party. But their valour is greater than their wisdom, and it is not impossible that Japan may have to face the most formidable of naval alliances.

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Meantime the military enthusiasm of Great Britain has had the British climate to contend with. Mud is the soldier's natural element, at all events in Northern Europe ; but the new levies have had to go into it at the deep end. Perhaps there has been less grouching than would have been heard if the men had not felt that they were really up against it ; for when that happens the British soldier becomes twice as good humoured. Still, a French conscript would open his eyes wide if he saw the parliamentary replies about the number and quality of meals, and the assurances that parents and newspapermen are welcome to come and inspect the camps. Old stagers from the last war—railway porters and the like—chuckle with approbation of the new dress. No puttees—no brass buttons ; those young fellows, the veterans think, won't know what trouble really was. Soldiering becomes a civilian kind of job ; the word may get a new meaning. A company commander in France, interviewing a draft just sent out asked one man if he had “ done any soldiering before ”. “ No Sir ”. “ Where were you ? ” “ In Gallipoli ”. “ You don't call that soldiering ? ” “ No, Sir ”.

**General  
Mud**

Soldiering meant parade and brass buttons. The less trouble it involves for a man to be "properly dressed on parade", the better; but the old idea of the professional army was to invent ways of keeping the men busy in peace time. Nowadays their time will be fully occupied in mastering the complicated tools they have to handle; and the new dress is a sign that this is recognized. But there will certainly be a hang-over from the past days; and apparently there is, in regard to the dress of officers. Correspondence in the *Times* raises the question whether a special mess uniform should be exacted or permitted. We all know that if it is permitted, it will be exacted. Within the regiment there has to be uniformity, and till the War at least, it was exceptional to meet a British officer who had only his pay to live on; the well-to-do set the standard. Now, we are told, it is for the commanding officer to decide whether the special uniform shall be obligatory; but in fact, no regiment likes to be outdone in regimental smartness by others; and the very best of the old school had the cult of full dress, because it was part of the regimental tradition. Mr. Hore Belisha is not afraid of hostile criticism and he means that the new army should be in many ways different from the old. What was best in the old was and is too strong to disappear; but the army will be all the better school for gentlemen if it is made as easy as possible for any militiaman with military aptitude to become an officer; and the less he has to spend in order to take his place and hold it, the better for everybody. Many a man who could have been a fine soldier and a noble gentleman has been kept out of the service because of the unnecessary expenses imposed on him; the full dress uniform was an important item of expense, but it also signified a wrong attitude.

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Professor Coupland's nobly planned work on "East Africa and its Invaders" is of the rare books which enlarge understanding. By a few pages of illuminating geography he shows how and why Africa, except on its Mediterranean front, was merely a gigantic obstacle to European commerce and adventure, whereas its eastern coast invited Asiatic invaders by harbours to which from December to the end of February the monsoon would

**African  
Story**

carry them along the shores of the Indian Ocean while from April to September the south west trade wind would bring them back. So, from long before the Christian era, Arabs, Persians and Hindus from the North-West were bringing their iron tools and glass to East Africa and returning with ivory and slaves. But Arabs were dominant and in the fourteenth century Ibn Battuta of Tangier described the East Coast, studded with "Moorish" towns well built of stone and mortar. Then the Portuguese found their way round the Cape and were more successful in breaking up the outposts of Arab civilization than in establishing anything fruitful of their own. In recurring wars between Europeans and Asiatics, the native population suffered at both hands while the drain of slaves increased—America as well as Asia now craving a supply. Geography again explains that because East Africa afforded no rivers, up and down which transport was possible, there were dreadful advantages in a commerce which made human beings at once carriers and merchandise. But the offence of it stank to heaven, and if Britain became the leading Power on that coast, its energies were directed there by the crusade far more than by commerce. After the defeat of Napoleon, when no flag could challenge the British in the Indian Ocean, the navy is found co-operating ardently with an Arab ruler who transferred his main seat of power from Muscat to Zanzibar. Seyyid Said is a curious and not unsympathetic figure, and during his long reign he steadily helped to prevent export of slaves to America and the Indies, provided his own subjects might supply his own dominions. But when even this was no longer tolerated, the position of an Arab Sultan in East Africa became impossible. Europe—which meant England—had to take charge.

The story is carried no further in this long review of more than twenty centuries; for it is only preliminary to a study of England's action in opening up East Africa. Sir John Kirk was the central mover in that series of events, and a detailed account of his work by the same historian is promised. Here is an example of the spirit in which historical biography should be approached.



The house of Murray which burnt Byron's Memoirs, now makes some amends to public curiosity by publishing a selection from the letters written to the poet at various times by various women—all of which he appears to have hoarded, "like a jackdaw". That is the phrase employed by Mr. Peter Quennell who has finished the task of editing the selection, begun by the lady who chose to be known as "George Paston"; and it conveys a lack of admiration. No professional lady killer is ever at his best in that relation and Mr. Quennell observes with justice that Byron, though he could not get on without the excitement of women, was much happier with his own sex. Shelley and Walter Scott who had as little in common as was possible for two great gentlemen, liked him without reserve; but it is very hard to like the composite picture of Byron that emerges from this volume—"Letters to Byron." All sorts and conditions of adorers contribute to form it, from Susan Vaughan, a housemaid at Newstead, and Susan Boyce, an actress of walking-on parts at Drury Lane, to Lady Caroline Lamb, who lost her head completely about the poet, and Miss Mercer Elphinstone, who kept hers. Perhaps the oddest figure in the group is Harriette Wilson, the intimate friend of half the peerage, who wanted Byron to make love to her and did not bring it off, for all her cleverness, which her letters fully display. At all events she is never abject, as most of the others become. An honourable exception is Claire Clairmont, Mrs. Shelley's sister, who had far more than the others to reproach Byron with, for she gave him a child and he took the child away from her, to be brought up in a convent—the least forgiveable thing about Byron is his frequent lapse into a veneer of respectability. Stevenson, writing of 'Gentlemen' quoted as examples two famous men—Walter Scott and Wellington; and as examples of the cad, two others—Byron and Napoleon. This book bears out at least one of his estimates. But then we do not see Byron in his relations with Lady Oxford, who was at least *grande dame*, or with the Guiccioli, who may probably have known the best that was in him.

# THE FORTNIGHTLY LIBRARY

## A FAMOUS DIARY

By PROFESSOR H. J. LASKI

DIARY OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION 1789-93, by Gouverneur Morris. Edited by Berna Cary Davenport. 2 vols. Harrap. 42s.

It is good, at long last, to have this famous diary in an unabridged form. Morris was, on any showing, one of the outstanding Americans of his time. Captured, in every sense a man of style, close to the heart of things, profoundly experienced in affairs both commercial and political, he was the kind of observer whose testimony is entitled to be considered representative. On any showing, he stands out among the foreign observers of the French revolution. No account of its events complete which fails to take account of his views.

He was, of course, a prejudiced witness. Deeply conservative, penetrated with the spirit of property, afraid of the mob, contemptuous of all who were not 'successful men', he approached the events he was to witness with a spirit not far removed from that of Edmund Burke. But he saw at first hand some of the great events of his time. He witnessed the opening of the States-General. He saw the riots which attended the dismissal of Necker. He watched Mrs. Siddons act and—a very different play—heard Burke and Fox at the trial of Warren Hastings.

He knew Pitt and negotiated with him on behalf of Washington. After he arrived in Paris in February, 1789, he saw, from the angle of the moderate royalists, almost everything of importance. He knew La Fayette well, and realized early how superior were his pretensions to his ability. He was acquainted with Madame de Staël; and he was as near the friend of Talleyrand as that enigmatic figure permitted anyone to be. He even had the distinction of successfully robbing the latter of his mistress, the Comtesse de Flahault. In all the intrigues which centred round the person of Louis XVI, he was a central figure. His *Diary* is an incomparable picture of a society in dissolution. It is also a remarkable study of the diplomat at work in the midst of complex and stirring events for which there are no precedents. Outside of Greville, it is difficult to think of any diarist who surpasses Morris in his particular genre.

He is not, it may be said, a sympathetic figure. Cold, self-centred, sensual, an intriguer by nature, with the slyness of temper that goes with his type, he saw the Revolution with but little realization of the forces in play. His sympathies, in his frigid way, were too settled to enable him ever to take an objective view of the events he witnessed. He made no effort to get into touch with

circles below those that fringed the interests of the Court ; and the picture he drew is, accordingly, painted always from the angle of its attitude. He realized that the old monarchy was dead beyond revival ; he did not understand the character of the new society that was being born. But he was a reporter of great skill, a kind of Autolycus of the unending stream of opinions that flowed his way. His mere record of these is of great value ; and his own opinions of them enable us to realize how the winds of doctrine affected a Conservative American to whom the New Deal of France seemed, with all its drama, inevitably destined to break against the unalterable rock of a human nature built upon the inexpugnable rights of tradition and property. And the *Diary*, too, is invaluable because it makes once more clear how, even in the midst of world-stirring events, the little incidents of daily life flow on, unaffected by the storm outside. Morris pursues his love-making in the very shadow of the guillotine. He can consider the moods of his lady as calmly as he considers the effect of the Duke of Brunswick's Manifesto on the course of policy. He has the practical man's dislike of the doctrinaires like Paine ; and the practical man's complete inability to see that history may be on the side of the doctrinaire. The *Diary*, on the whole, is a truthful record of events as he saw them ; though the date at which it stops—the execution of Louis XVI—puts Morris in a more favourable light than he would have appeared had he recorded, for instance, his cynical lack of interest in the fate of Tom Paine when the latter was living in prison in fear of his life.

Only a small part of the *Diary* previously been published ; and what now appears is of hardly less value than what has hitherto been known. The account of Morris's own commercial transactions, before his appointment as Ambassador, are important for the light they throw on the attitude of the interest of the Federalist Party in the United States. Even the long account of his love affairs are interesting. They throw a fascinating sidelight upon the manners of the French aristocracy in its decline. On the ways of finance on the character of the monarchy, on the rise of parties in a revolutionary period on the technique of French government on diplomatic methods in a Europe that has gone forever, Morris is a witness whose shrewdness and insight are of the highest value. He knew that he was living at a seminal time ; and it is a tribute to his sagacity that he recorded so much of outstanding importance.

The *Diary* has been edited by Mrs. Beatrix Davenport, the great-granddaughter of Morris. It cannot, I feel, be said that she has done a satisfactory piece of work. Much of her commentary is written with a kind of forced sprightliness that is interesting and irritating. Much of it, also, fails to take account of the fact that upon a great deal of what Morris wrote history research has provided material which is fundamental to a judgment of his record. Most of her notes, also, are written in an historic present tense which reads abominably ; and her accounts of the remoter personages are too rarely adequate. Morris certainly deserved a more competent annotation. Family devotion is rarely an effective substitute for serious scholarship.



THE DEFENCE OF BRITAIN, by  
Liddell Hart. *Faber and Faber.*  
12s. 6d.

Captain Liddell Hart's latest book falls into three main parts: an exposition of the present strategic situation, with emphasis on the modifications of their own disadvantage caused by the oscillations of the democratic Powers in the sphere of foreign policy; a discussion of the means of resolving the problems of our defence in this context, with stress on the advantage which the non-aggressor Powers enjoy from the present superiority of the defensive over the offensive; and an account of the recent Army reforms from which emerges, by implication, the importance of the part played by the author in their adoption. Intrinsically each of these parts is equal in interest; but while the first two represent mainly developments of ideas which are familiar to the very wide circle of Captain Liddell Hart's readers, the third part is wholly novel to all but a privileged circle with special information. If it be true, as the author claims, that it may justly be said that more has been done in Mr. Hore-Belisha's two years of office than has been achieved before in a generation it must follow that Captain Liddell Hart will go down in history as one of the greatest, if not the greatest of the influences in fitting the British Army for its contemporary life. For included in this volume appears memorandum after memorandum which he prepared and submitted to the defence authorities; and in most instances the substance of their recommendations has been adopted.

After the war a period of stagnation and indeed reaction ensued in British military organization, though happily

not to quite the same extent in British military thought. The Great War taught the superiority of fire-power to mere man-power, the machine gun's mastery of the battlefield except when opposed by tanks, and the increasing threat of air power to the security of civilian populations. Each of these lessons was neglected. The proportion which artillery bore to the number of riflemen in the division returned to its pre-war level; the Tank Corps, or Regiment as it is now called, languished in neglect, its most promising officers either being put on half-pay or given appointments in which they had no chance to make use of their special knowledge. While the Field Force was not brought up to date, the defence of the civilian population from air attack was regarded as altogether too static a task to be worthy of the attention of the soldier.

With the advent to the War Office of Mr. Hore-Belisha a drastic process of reform set in. Younger minds were applied to our military problems. The divisional organization of the Army was revised, largely according to Captain Liddell Hart's proposals, while drill was modernized and the conditions of service improved both for officers and for non-commissioned ranks. Above all, the gravity of the problem of air defence was appreciated, five anti-aircraft divisions were created, the creation of others is projected, and an adequate organization for air defence has been created in the War Office itself.

The author's proposals for reform, or many of them, have been accepted. Has their intellectual background? The confident but unhistorical assertion by Ministers that there can be no such

thing as a war of limited liability, the pledging of our resources irrespective of the question whether those resources will really be available, the loose talk in certain circles about training the Army "for victory" without an attempt to analyse what, in terms of the modern world, victory means: all these things raise doubts not only whether the author's ideas have been accepted—and he would not claim infallibility for them—but also whether they have been understood. The virtue of this book lies not only in its intense interest as a document in contemporary British history, but also on the one hand in its demonstration of the complexity of modern war, and on the other of the fact that "victory" in the ordinary sense of the term, is almost unattainable. And in this Captain Liddell Hart often regarded as something of a Cassandra, gives a message which is in reality a message of hope. To save democracy, and Britain, "victory" in the sense of the annihilation of the enemy, is not necessary. All that is needed is that aggression shall not succeed.

W. T. WELLS.

**THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE**, by

The Rt. Hon. Neville Chamberlain.  
*Hutchinson. 8s. 6d.*

**STEP BY STEP 1936-1939**, by the Rt.

Hon. Winston Churchill. *Thornton  
Butterworth. 12s. 6d.*

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**, by the Rt. Hon.

Anthony Eden. *Faber & Faber. 12s. 6d.*

It is characteristic of our times that leading statesmen should experience no sense of indecency in stripping themselves naked to the public gaze by the assembling of their recorded utterances over a given period. No question of

any strip-tease: we see at once the man, the whole man, his character faithfully mirrored in the spoken word.

Mr Neville Chamberlain, it must be admitted, gains enormously by the device of a portrait in a mirror. The gawky figure, that rasping note, that insufferable air of complacency—those traits which are such a drawback when the Prime Minister gets up in the House or on a platform—are no longer in evidence; instead we get the picture of a blunt honest patriot succeeding according to his lights, whose only cardinal error is to have ever dabbled in 'foreign affairs'. That he is, in his own words, "a man of peace to the depths of my soul", his actions prove less than his speeches abundantly. But that, when dealing with the relations of States and those of some people, foreigners, with their different standards and modes of behaviour, he is woefully out of his element comes through no less clearly. Elsewhere I have dubbed him diplomatic Parsifal—and I still maintain that this is to characterize the man correctly, not at all, as so many maintain, as a secret sympathizer with the Fascist way of life. But, more fundamentally, as these speeches show, despite his father's Imperialist pattern—he is the perfect Cobdenite, concerned only that the benighted nations may be cast off the panoply of armaments and ideology to enable trade and finance (made in Britain!) to resume its nineteenth-century sway. 'How confidence be restored'—that is the continual refrain, revealing a complete failure to appreciate the conditions that operate in our international anarchy.

Considering that on the main question of what Mr. Churchill calls the Grand Alliance of States against the aggressor

the assembly of overwhelming force moral and physical, in support of international law", Mr. Chamberlain had to eat his words—by the way about that hat he was going to if he were shown to have mis-estimated about the purpose of Italy! Mr. Arthur Bryant's connecting letter is, in some cases, scarcely correct or felicitous.

Mr. Churchill may well ruefully reflect—in his Preface—upon the measureless progress along their own lines of thought" whereby His Majesty's Government "have at length . . . accepted even in detail the policy and scheme" set forth in this chaplet of pertinent phrases. The foot-stones of Step by Step' are not, as it happens, echoes, but fortnightly letters which Churchill wrote over a period of three years and which make an admirable running commentary on events. The high lights are Mr. Churchill on 'The Austrian Eye-opener', March 18th, 1938, 'The Spanish Ulcer', November 30th, 1938, and finally that March 24th, 1939, bearing the impressive title of 'The Crunch' and relating to the events of the Ides of March.

Mr. Churchill, a man of genius, is no second time. Mr. Anthony Eden, on the other hand, is very much a survivor of the lost generation', whom a combination of hard work, ability and good fortune have brought early into the front-rank. His speeches on Spain, on the League of Nations, on British foreign policy, generally and on democracy are sterling stuff, without, however, any of Mr. Churchill's artistry. Unlike Mr. Chamberlain, he does happen to understand his *métier* and the facts of the world to-day, in which the League of

Nations—or some such international polity—is an inherent necessity: as he says in his Foreword "our problem closely resembles that which confronted individual countries in respect of their internal order centuries ago". It is because he is acutely conscious of that problem that he is singularly fitted to conduct this country's 'foreign affairs'.

W. HORSEFALL CARTER.

CHINA AT WAR, by Freda Utley.  
*Faber & Faber. 12s. 6d.*

This finely written and very moving book takes a high place among the many books, some of them admirable, already published on Japan's invasion of China. Miss Utley lived for some weeks during 1938 in Canton under continual Japanese air raids and was then in Hankow through the summer before its fall. Twice she visited the battle front on the Yangtze, getting within a short distance of the Japanese lines; she saw the Chinese soldiers on the march, in hospital, or dragging themselves painfully along with horrid wounds; and she interviewed most people worth meeting from the Generalissimo and Mme. Chiang Kai-shek downwards. All this she describes simply and with vivid effect. With her the reader, however little he knows of the Far East, may wonder that Europe can pay so little attention to the enormous tragedy that is being played in China. Miss Utley marvels that "the American Red Cross raised 30,000,000 dollars in four weeks (for the Japanese earthquake in 1923) whereas for China it has failed to raise even a million". Of the Japanese air raids, literally to be numbered by thousands, one does not know whether the more to be staggered by their cruelty or their



stupidity. Here is Japan continually declaring that she only wishes to be friends with the Chinese people; and her aeroplanes have wiped out hundreds of villages of no military importance and slain thousands of inoffensive country-folk. Yet terrorism has only recoiled on her own head, rousing the people of China in hatred of the invader as they have never been roused before.

The special value of Miss Utley's book, however, is its frank and clear-sighted criticisms of the way the war is being fought by China. Although she quickly fell under the irresistible charm of the Chinese nature, she kept her head and refused to be hypnotized by the propagandists of the capital ranting about the unity of China and the 450 millions; and she shrewdly wishes that China had fewer people, in which case they might be more highly valued. For the common soldier her admiration is unbounded; his dogged bravery and silent endurance of agonizing wounds are indeed beyond all praise. But Miss Utley strongly criticizes the Government for discouraging young men of the middle and upper classes from joining the army. This is not only bad for them, but, as Miss Utley says, until they do so, it will never occur to their mothers and sisters that it is their duty to see that military hospitals are clean and well supplied. There are exceptions, of course, and all praise is due to Dr. Robert Lim, head of the Chinese Red Cross, for the organization he has built up. But for the most part the care of the wounded is a shocking combination of indifference and mismanagement. Miss Utley called the attention of Mme. Chiang Kai-shek to this evil and reforms are taking place, but there is room for far

more in many directions. As guerrillas have shown in North China success in wearing down the Japanese depends on enlisting the peasants' help which can only be done by agrarian reform on the largest scale. "This hitherto been resisted by the mandarin mentality" of the conservative Kuomintang. But Miss Utley thinks that General Chiang is moving more and more towards the radicals, as he must be if he is to convince the people that fighting for China means fighting for a better life for all.

The book is profusely illustrated with interesting though often gruesome photographs.

O. M. GREEN.

#### INVITATION TO ROUMANIA,

Derek Patmore. *Macmillan*. 10s.

#### THE MIRRORS OF VERSAILLES

Elizabeth Kyle. *Constable*. 10s.

Mr. Patmore enjoyed himself in Roumania, staying with friends in Bucharest and in the country. Describing the introduction of agrarian reform whereby the landowners (and charitable institutions) have lost a great deal of their property, it is not possible for life in a country-house to be pleasant, and Mr. Patmore does not do justice to the amenities he encountered. The photographs by his friend Herbert List are particularly good, especially that of the old fortress of Hotin on the Russian border. Mr. Patmore does not seem to have penetrated further than that into Bessarabia where he would have found the country house of an unusual host, a well-known astronomer whose expeditions were subsidized by King Carol. Of course he does not rival Mr. D. J. Haig in penetrating to the heart of

manian peasant, but although he associated with the sophisticated rather than with the peasants, he doesn't share the latter. It was a pity that a blond young convict, probably from Bucovina, asked him if he spoke Roumanian that he had to reply in the negative, for something of interest might have resulted. And among what might have been we must deplore the fact that Mr. List did not take a photograph of Miron Cristea, the late Primate, for that prelate was perhaps the most handsome bishop in the world. However, his studies of gipsy children are delightful.

Comparisons may be odious, but occasionally they are unavoidable.

Elisabeth Kyle, whose knowledge of Roumanian, to say nothing of Bulgarian, Czech, Russian and Latvian, is more extensive and profound than that of Mr. Patmore (which he might be the first to acknowledge) appears in her latest book of 'the vivid descriptions which travellers visiting Central Europe give of both country-house splendour . . .'

Referring to the Roumanian nobles to whom Mr. Patmore spent his time and to whom he celebrates, 'these families' she says, 'are of Greek and not Roumanian origin at all, and their estates are in Paris, though their families may be in Roumania'. It is interesting to compare Miss Kyle's account of a visit to a Roumanian country house with the same environment in Mr. Patmore's pages. He describes a dining-room aglow with candles, he is rather inclined to tell us the names of the prominent persons who were present and to repeat parts of the social or literary conversation. Miss Kyle, out of the fullness of her

knowledge, may place before us people who are too knowledgeable for human nature's daily food, but she avoids every trace of society gossip. She is a literary artist, while Mr. Patmore's chronicle is matter-of-fact. He writes of the architecture and paintings of Roumanian monasteries (which, after all, others have done before him), whereas Miss Kyle gives us a most attractive account of 'The Hosts of the Lord', a movement which has been started by men who allege that the Orthodox Church is dying of over-ceremonial and senile decay. She tells us of the simple country priest, Father Trifa, so different from Wesley and yet . . .

It is characteristic of Miss Kyle that when a prominent Roumanian drives her to his country place from Brashov she does not give his name, but their conversation on the way is much more encyclopædic than anything attempted by Mr. Patmore. Yet, although his book is rather superficial and not very critical, it is quite pleasant.

HENRY BAERLEIN.

**MEN AND THE FIELDS**, by Adrian Bell. *Batsford*. 8s. 6d.

**EAST ANGLIA**, by Doreen Wallace. *Batsford*. 8s. 6d.

**THE ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE**. *Batsford*. 6s.

If in the future anybody should think it necessary to compile a serious study of the causes and effects of our increasing interest in books on the English countryside, the name of Adrian Bell will certainly have to figure prominently in the index. As a writer who was also a farmer, he was one of the first to indicate the direction which the

literature of the rural scene was destined to follow. True, there were earlier pioneers. Edward Thomas's nature poems were as accurately informed as they were delicately attuned; and George Bourne's prose descriptions of Surrey and the Surrey labourer were, for twenty years ago, unusually factual. But it was the popularity of Mr. Bell's trilogy that revealed the reader's point of interest as having definitely shifted from the aesthetic to the informative. After *Corduroy*, raptures would never again suffice.

If *Men and the Fields* is not Mr. Bell's best book, it is still streets ahead of the majority of country books now being published. It is intelligent, unsentimental and extremely sensitive: you do not have to scratch very deep to find the poet in Mr. Bell. Though it is perhaps not quite on the same level as his earlier book, *The Cherry Tree*, it is somewhat in the same category—and anyway books like *The Cherry Tree* are as choice and rare as butterflies in February. The fourteen chapters of the present book carry us through the seasons, only this time they are less the main subject-matter than a convenient string on which the author may thread reminiscences and descriptions of his various excursions. But whether Mr. Bell writes as the farmer in Suffolk or the holiday-maker in the West Country, his view of country matters is always the same, that of a practitioner who is also a poet.

It is just this uncommon blend in him that makes his work so valuable. Here, for instance, is a random example of how the poet in him sees things. "For centuries horses must have gone out of that gateway to water at the pond across the road—gone out by

themselves, the marks of the harness fresh on their coats, then turned back with streaming mouths to the stable where the horsekeeper waited". Mr. Bell also knows the facts that inform the poetry—the bones behind the feasting flesh:—

"These buildings have the haphazard look that is called picturesque. They were built so, some would say, haphazardly, don't believe it. Nothing is done haphazardly on a farm. Take merely the siting of the stack. There is the whole stackyard put in it. But stand by the farmer as he is giving the word where to build it. The men with the first wagon-load wait round. He paces here and there, looks about him, then plants his stick. That is the plan. The stack rises there, and has its relation to the buildings according to its use, and of what it consists. If so much forethought goes to the placing of a stack, how much more to the construction of a building?"

In fact, it will be a happy year that produces a second country book as genuine as *Men in the Fields*. Moreover, the production of the book beautifully accords with its contents. John Newbery has been called in to illustrate it, and his numerous drawings and colour lithographs are as accurate as they are poetic and not without a delicious sense of humour.

To write adequately of the whole of East Anglia in 114 pages of text must have been an extraordinarily difficult thing to do, and Mrs. Wallace was wise to be "rigorously selective". It might with advantage have been even more selective. Neither the place nor the reader can glean much help from such information as this:—

"Farther south still are Ugley, which belies its name, and Stansted Mountfitchet, a name with a glorious feudal ring, denoting a small village of considerable dignity. The road brings us eventually to Bishop's Stortford, a regrettable place, very much overgrown with industrial houses".



fact, the greater part of Mrs. Place's book is a sort of gazetteer, the remainder of the book consisting of a section on farming in East Anglia (very lively and informed), another on architecture, a tantalisingly brief section on the local dialect (in which it is only suggested that the close-throated speech of East Anglians is due to the biting east wind: "folk let as much as possible of it into their mouths"), and two rather sketchy sections on geology and fauna. Nevertheless, Mrs. Place knows her country well; and she conducts us across it at rather too slow a pace, her observations are at times first-hand and accurate.

It is hardly necessary to add, perhaps, that *East Anglia* is well illustrated; and the same may be said of *The English Countryside*, a symposium in which the various contributors survey the several aspects of English landscape, fen and meadow, down and moor, and so on. Indeed, to say a Batsford book, these days, is at least to say a book of superb and appropriate illustrations.

C. HENRY WARREN.

TRAIT OF STELLA BENSON, by  
J. Ellis Roberts. *Macmillan*. 15s.

Stella Benson is not everybody's favourite. When she died, in December, 1933, some felt that England had lost its greatest contemporary woman writer; others could not, and still others could not read her books at all. The remarkably personal quality of her writing, even when her characters seem detached and humorous creations quite independent of her brooding mind, cannot be held responsible. So many reviewers look for originality of plot but not of conception, and are discomfitted by work that flouts the normal premises

of fiction, being produced with almost unflinching honesty by a spirit forever diffident, questioning and self-tortured. Stella Benson had the precious unhappiness of being a fairy—lonely, desolate, aware that she must make an obstinate effort to fit in where others naturally belonged, and yet with enough pleasure in that normal life to despise the oddity she was half proud of.

No account of her life could signify if it did not dwell on these spiritual perplexities that underlay the plain facts of her career. Mr. Ellis Roberts, writing as a very close friend of her latter years, has felt this necessity very strongly. He appears as interpreter rather than chronicler. He inverts, as she did, the positions of reality and illusion, by showing her charity work in Hoxton, her visits to California and her contacts with the dreary official society of small Chinese towns, as the mere setting for, and influence on the true Stella. This Stella never could and never *would* be identified with Mrs. O'Gorman Anderson, wife of a British Customs official—a lady who appeared to her own nervous sensibility as someone inordinately dull and old and stupid, someone who could not possibly be liked. Mr. Roberts, in his affectionate anxiety to encompass his strange subject, is to be found coaxing a recalcitrant heroine, pleading against her own perversities, analyzing the too-analytical mind, carefully handling spots so tender that the very reader is inclined to shrink, and murmur, "Oh, that hurts". Gentle, loving and immensely intimate, he makes point after point that if not identical differ only by the finest shades. One seems to be eavesdropping, and wonders at last if this merciless kindness is not too revealing, if it is not too near what Stella Benson might say in her own

novels, behind the veil of an invented character, but would never have published frankly about herself.

"Stella is a fool, in the Pauline sense; down in the dust in the arena, chattering at the silly merry cocktail parties, wounded, tormented, perplexed—only differing from the ordinary people she portrays because she holds tight in her left hand the magic crystal of her old fairies, and at night looks into the cupboard to see, with disapproving surprise, that still in the corner is the broomstick that gives her the freedom of the real world".

To over-interpret a complex personality is an unusual fault and a venial one. Despite its abundance of psychological probings, this unconventional biography of an evasive spirit has a fascination hard to withstand. Those who already admire Stella Benson's work will feel their understanding deepened, and some who have formerly been baffled may find a key in their hands. Forty-five years must pass before her diary becomes public property; but the letters printed here are fine enough to make us hope that Mr. Roberts will publish her entire correspondence. "It is difficult", Stella wrote in one of those letters, "to know how much one owes to oneself, how far one ought to go to keep one's own soul alive". It was her insistence on keeping that soul alive and burning that made her intolerant of the eyeless communities in China, and unhappy even in a happy marriage; while it matured and intensified art which she could never allow to die. The incurable loneliness of the artist, and the clash of art with the demands of practical life are the leading motives in her brief career. Mr. Roberts has more than adequately revealed the drama of them.

SYLVA NORMAN

## THE FALL OF THE RUSSIAN MONARCHY, by Sir Bernard Pares. Cape. 18s.

Sir Bernard Pares has probably done more than any other Britisher to bring before us the Russia of the Tsar. Although one may differ from him in his estimate of this or that event, it would be difficult to do other than admire the thoroughness with which he has collected his materials and verified his data before beginning to write. Still more must we appreciate the way in which he has made his materials available to us. The "Fall of the Russian Monarchy" is a story well told by a man who was intimate with many who fell with it. He saw the monarch falling, knew it must fall and rather regrets its passing.

Sir Bernard seems to go out of his way to emphasize the personal character of Tsar Nicholas II. and the simplicity and sincerity of the Tsarina, as if these were the qualities by which history would judge them as rulers of a crumbling Empire. Yet the effect of the evidence here compiled is to leave the reader amazed that it were possible for two such utterly incompetent people to have the destinies of a nation thrust upon them.

The Tsar may have had charm, but the evidence here collated proves him to have been incapable of independent decision. The Tsarina may have been beautiful and sincere but she was also ignorant and superstitious and steeped in class prejudice. The story of her blind subservience to Rasputin is nauseating.

But the lives of the Tsar and Tsarina reflect the lives of the ruling caste which surrounded them. The wonder is not that the Russian Monarchy fell, a

th it all the feudal rubbish attendant it, but that it so long endured. The cord given by Sir Bernard, of the happenings in the Russian army during the war, of the men driven, without rifles and guns, to face the highly mechanized German forces and the isolation and corruption behind the front, leaves one wondering as to how such suffering and degradation of humanity can tolerate before rising against it.

Nevertheless, throughout the story of this welter of affairs, the author keeps close to the personalities of the Tsar and Tsarina, their prayers, their personal aspirations, their family life which somehow or other to them had not caught up in a storm, the magnitude of which they did not know, and the significance of which they had not the wit to understand. Sir Bernard follows them right through to the end at Peterburg and rounds off the story thus :

"If," he says, "twenty years after the March Revolution a stranger now visited the little palace at Tsarskoe Selo (the home of the Tsar and Tsarina) he would find it exactly as it was on the night when the family gathered with the Grand Duke in the semi-circular hall with the luggage packed for the journey to the Caucasus. . . . and the guide might explain to him without a trace of irony that the last Tsar was a healthy out-of-door man, delighting in his beautiful swimming bath, that the 'private' bathroom was also almost a library, the centre of the family life, that the two sovereigns were excellent parents and that their children were devoted to them. He would be left, as he came away, to shape his own memory of his visit and what he would inevitably

feel would be that all this happened far back in the middle ages, when it was still thought possible to regard a sixth of the world as a personal estate and to govern a hundred and seventy millions of humanity from a lady's drawing room. Then he would say to himself that all this was gone, far away, never to come back again."

It would be worth while reading this book if only to remind us of the magnitude of the task undertaken by the revolutionaries when they took the reins of power.

J. T. MURPHY.

**LOVE IN THE SUN**, by Leo Walmsley.  
*Collins. 8s. 6d.*

**THE BRIDE**, by Margaret Irwin.  
*Chatto & Windus. 8s. 6d.*

**JONATHAN NORTH**, by J. L. Hodson.  
*Gollancz. 8s. 6d.*

These three novels have all been either 'Chosen' or 'Recommended' by the Book Society. They are all excellent examples of the kind of work that Book Societies are expected to select, large, solid, efficient stories which belong to the upper levels of popular fiction. Mr. Walmsley's *Love In The Sun* is the most interesting of the three, and will probably be widely read on the strength of private recommendation. It's just the sort of book that people bully their friends into reading. One of the widespread dreams of the present day is the escape from the stress of a 'Crisis' civilization to the innocence and self-contained economy of a Robinson Crusoe existence, where neither wars nor slumps can trouble the pure in heart. We all dream that dream, in one blissful form or another, but Mr. Walmsley has gone one better and made a novel of it. His hero and



heroine retire to a shack in Cornwall, fish for their dinner, cultivate their cabbage-patch and generally borrow as much from Crusoe as contemporary Cornwall permits. Various obstacles are overcome, the hero turns author and wins success, the heroine votes everything 'grand' and 'thrilling', a baby is born, and we—fingering our gas-masks in repulsive cities—are left to sigh deeply and reflect that here at last is a novelist who knows that it's the Real Things In Life that count. I imagine that, for quite three months, *Love In The Sun* will intoxicate a large section of the population. Mr. Walmsley has undoubtedly struck a gusher, in every sense. The craving that he satisfies is basically a decent and universal craving, whatever layers of sentimentality may blur it; and his novel is the perfect dream-satisfaction. The hero makes raspberry-canes yield heavily in the first season (for which alone I salute him); he also fishes expertly, carpenters with equal skill, salvages valuable flotsam and jetsam, and contrives to sell worms and cockroaches at astonishing prices. These things are recorded with a robust simplicity and narrative skill which save the reader from considering his own ineptitude in such circumstances, and I shall be surprised if *Love In The Sun* doesn't make Cornish shacks as fashionable as Sussex cottages.

*The Bride* is an historical novel, devoted to the events of the same year as Mr. Jack Lindsay's recent novel, 1649; but whereas Mr. Lindsay's sympathies lie to the Left of Cromwell, Miss Irwin is a royalist in the romantic manner. Her concern is therefore with the exiles at The Hague and their attempts to effect a rising in favour of Charles II; and more particularly

with the Marquis of Montrose and his fiancée, Princess Louise (sister of the royalist commander, Prince Rupert). I lack the expert knowledge to check Miss Irwin's accuracy in detail, but her writing inspires confidence and the book has the air of being grounded in careful research. Her interpretation is another matter, and here it seems that history and fiction must always be incompatible since their aims and needs are so different. Miss Irwin makes a great effort to bring her characters back to life, but they are fairy-tale figures entangled in their own legends and touched up by a modern hand. Prince Rupert comes near to being an Ethel M. Dell hero, his sisters are a jolly group of suburban misses, and Montrose plays Fairy Prince from start to finish. The original flavour of that rich brew has evaporated, and synthetic romance is no equivalent. To recapture it fully is a prodigious task, if it is not quite impossible, and it is to Miss Irwin's credit that she has moments of success. *The Bride* (which incidentally completes a trilogy) is at least a worthy attempt to accomplish an extremely difficult aim. It holds the reader's attention, it is full of incident and colour, it has the mild sweetness and sadness of fairy-tale, and its drama has a theatrical power in spite of the plump upholstery of its nostalgic romanticism.

*Jonathan North* is another of the ample North Country portraits in which there seems to be a permanent and inexhaustible demand. Mr. Hodson introduces his hero at the age of twelve and follows his career to the threshold of old age. It is the career of a self-made man, a miner's son who uses his wits, thrives on the shady side of the street without coming to grief, and quickly

akes his fortune. Life, for Jonty  
 irth, is a rough-and-tumble and he  
 takes up his mind to get on top.  
 Having got there he interests himself  
 left-wing politics and vigorously  
 attacks familiar abuses: like most of  
 he is more concerned with the sins  
 others than with his own. Some of  
 e descriptions of the war-years are  
 excellently done, and the whole story  
 s that blustering, zestful, racy gale  
 energy which seems to blow  
 nstantly from Lancashire.

DESMOND HAWKINS.

ED STRANGERS, by Elspeth Huxley.  
*Chatto & Windus. 8s. 6d.*

TITLE TIN GOD, by Frank Tilsley.  
*Collins. 7s. 6d.*

HE DUCHESS OF POPOCATAPETL,  
 by W. J. Turner. *Dent. 7s. 6d.*

There is a glorified form of slumming  
 these days that moves the beaten  
 bourgeois to write books about the  
 proletariat. Karl Marxes are two a  
 penny, and these days you've got to  
 walk to Hampstead to glimpse a pair  
 of moleskins or corduroy pants. Mrs.  
 Elspeth Huxley has introduced this  
 aesthetic trend into anthropology. She  
 has written a novel about Africa, from  
 the native's point of view. And  
 obviously she imposes upon herself a  
 severe handicap. She's a pinkie for a  
 part, and to get inside the skin of a  
 negro and record, in novel form, the  
 life around you, with all the added  
 complexity of having to receive these  
 impressions through a subconscious  
 jammed with all the symbolism known  
 to Freud, Jones, Jung & Co., I submit,  
 is a job for an African Dickens.

Mrs. Huxley, inspired by the best  
 intentions in the world, has produced

an unsuccessful novel. Had she set  
 herself the task of writing about the  
 Africans from the District Commis-  
 sioner's view-point, one side of the  
 picture would, at least, have been  
 clearly expressed. As it is, the picture  
 one gets is one of general confusion and  
 bewilderment. The West Africans  
 cannot undersand why little bits of  
 copper or silver are better than goats  
 as currency. After all, they say, you  
 can always eat your goats on a rainy  
 day.

This bit of logic adds a wrinkle to the  
 brows of the African and D.C. alike.  
 To the negro who gets along with his  
 little tabus, his dark gods, his goats and  
 enviably naïve laws of property the  
 European (his boss), is just a dangerous  
 eccentric, with his magic that smells of  
 iodoform, with his murderous weapons  
 blessed by his god, his inhuman laws

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of property, his incomprehensible moustache and obvious savagery.

One day he will learn what this Red Stranger really means. He will write a book about it too. And its message will not be obscured, for he will not write it from the pink District Commissioner's feelings about the African problem and its relation to Empire. It will be a much simpler book than *Red Strangers*, which is a grand jungle to grope around in.

In Frank Tilsley's new novel, *Little Tin God*, there is a little suburban *führer* called Carl who marries a little suburban *hausfrau* called Jean, a straightforward case of X marrying Y. That Carl has German ancestry, and is proud of it, is incidental. He would have been a bowler-hatted and be-gamped *führer* anyway. As it is he beats his wife (a very old suburban hobby), indulges in all the petty bickerings, and shares the ideals of his next-door-neighbour. Nothing new here. But yes! for Carl punches his boss on the nose and goes in for espionage. Naturally, one can't help feeling that this is a much pleasanter occupation than the one he leaves (clerking in a city Bank), and so, in a sense, he earns one's sympathy.

It's the wife-beating that's not cricket, and this, coupled with his nazi-spying leads to worse than domestic discord. Jean, at the very end of the book thinks: *I shall have to leave him now, she told herself, desperate, knowing perfectly well that she would not leave him; realizing how unlikely it was that she would ever leave him.*

On this note of indecision the story concludes. It is a pity that Jean didn't throw a custard-pie at the cad.

James Blow is the hero of the *Duchess of Popocatapetl*. We follow him

through his fantastic adventure conscious all the time of W. J. Turner magic prose, we listen-in to conversations, which are faithful recordings of the Bloomsbury 1920 Blues, and marvel at Blow-cum-Turner daringly debunking some literary gent who has probably de-bunked, and buried himself long ago. There are discussions of isms, and the answer is a lemon. Blow and his friend Airbubble's talk positively scintillate. Blow's dissertation on the intellectuals who were a-fighting in Spain, and after Spain 'helped' China, sparkles like a past diamond. After publicly announcing their intention of helping China, they would go "and get material for books for which enterprising publishers four the money". Blow doesn't like the "intellectual vultures". Neither do I. So what? Is it any good telling the world, that rather little word called Bloomsbury, or, more significant known as W.C.1, how bogus they are? Being bogus happens to be the profession. Mr. Turner's book is clever it was meant to be; it is fantastic and witty for it was meant to be. If you don't get my meaning, the Duchess will I know, give me an understanding wink.

MAX WOOD.

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WEEK-END WODEHOUSE. Herbert Jenkins. 7s 6d.

If there is nothing fresh to say about P. G. Wodehouse it is nevertheless true that Wodehouse remains fresh to his readers on every page. There is real no knowing what the man will say next and in this book, a new spasm of Wodehouse fun, the author gives some old favourites and some pieces hitherto unpublished in book form,



## OUR CONTRIBUTORS

For the benefit of our many overseas readers we provide here each month a brief sketch by way of introduction of our contributors to THE FORTNIGHTLY public.

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That master puppeteer, Herr Hitler, kept all Europe dangling on a g string throughout the best part of what is to be known as the holiday month. We write the noise of war is everywhere apparent and our only satisfaction is that a grim one, is that we are no longer unprepared and we can look into the future with fortitude if only we have hope. THE FORTNIGHTLY searchlight casting its beam around to illuminate the darker spots, forgets to zig and Europe for the moment, draw attention to a peril, none the less dangerous for being distant, in the Far East. Freda Utley, whose recent most excellent book, *China at War*, reviewed this month, makes plain that Anglo-American co-operation depends largely on Great Britain's attitude towards the aggressor, Japan. Freda Utley has seen a great deal of the world in China and writes with a first hand knowledge of events. At home she is known to us as a very able writer on Far-Eastern affairs and editor of the weekly bulletin, *Far Eastern Review*.

Godfrey Lias, who brings the searchlight nearer home, has been for many years Diplomatic Correspondent, for example, of the *Christian Science Monitor*. A worker in the National

Labour cause, he serves on the editorial board of the News-Letter. Mr. Lias is discussing Germany's relationship with Hungary and another article which takes us in the same direction is by Hugh Seton-Watson, a son of Professor Seton-Watson, writing on the Roumanian Peasantry. Mr. Seton-Watson has recently been appointed Lecturer in the Department of International Politics, at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth.

Darker clouds tend to drive the problem of Palestine into the background and, accordingly, we welcome all the more Captain Victor Cazalet's article, which is not prepared to let the matter rest. Captain Cazalet has been Conservative M.P. for Chippenham since 1924 and has travelled extensively all over the world. Visits to the Near East have given Captain Cazalet a clear insight into the problems of Palestine.

The air 'war' which took place over Eastern England during August gave some cause for some satisfaction as our defence services proved to be efficient, but Group-Captain L. L. Maclean paints another side of the picture in his article and gives cause for uneasiness which is shared by R. Ansell Wells, who makes no apology for his defence of the horse in warfare. Mr. Wells is a man of

many parts. A countryman, an authority on horses and a keen musician, it is something of a surprise to find that he speaks Icelandic and that his knowledge of that country is profound. Group-Captain Maclean has been, in recent years, in active command of a long distance night bomber squadron, Chief Air Staff Officer in a Bomber Group, and in command of a Fighter Station and the Special Air Fighting Development Establishment. In addition he has been Air Staff Officer at Headquarters Air Defence of Great Britain and Air Representative at the League of Nations.

Two writers, **Hector Bolitho** and **Arthur Calder-Marshall**, lend literary distinction to our pages. Like Mr.

Bolitho, Mr. Calder-Marshall travelled much and returns to England from America with a wholehearted admiration for his subject, John Steinbeck.

**Frank Clements**, whose article on German Naval Aims, appeared early in the year, returns from a European tour to tell us something of the cinema in different countries.

Finally the two articles on domestic issues are contributed by **John Armit**, who has been making a particular study of unemployment, and **F. Elwyn Jones**, a barrister, whose name will be familiar to readers of THE FORTNIGHTLY, as a writer on European affairs. He is now editing a book, *Safeguards of Justice*, to be published by Cape.



## THE FORTNIGHTLY MISCELLANY

What the eye does not see, the heart still fails to grieve over, if the object of grief is far enough away. Miss Freda Utley in her article, published in THE FORTNIGHTLY, this month, says quite truly that "even in the view of the Labour and Liberal parties the fate of China's Four Hundred Millions is obviously of infinitely less importance than the fate of the Poles, the Roumanians or some other white nation". But Miss Utley has seen the suffering in China, seen the masses of refugees creeping anywhere for shelter, seen the sick and the little children lying helpless, covered only by a few rags, while mothers with diseased babies in their arms fell on their knees before her crying, and asking for medical care. Everyone should read Miss Utley's book, *China at War*, and everyone, while reading it, should try to visualize the condition of the thirty million refugees in China. It is useless to pretend that one can do nothing to help; humanity demands that no effort should be spared. The British Fund for the Relief of Distress in China will tell you how to help. It is in the range of everyone's pocket to do something. Four shillings will feed, clothe and house a refugee for a whole month. Five shillings will do the same for an orphan in need of added care, while five pounds will provide for twenty-five or help to provide a hospital with its needed anæsthetics and medical supplies. Money is needed for food, money is needed for medical supplies and hospital dressings, money is needed for blankets, rugs and soap. Many people are giving up hours of time to help, rug firms have been generous, shipping companies are carrying everything you help to buy for the refugees, freight free. There never was a greater need for humanity to speak. Please do something about it; please send a contribution to Dr. H. Gordon Thompson, 121, Westbourne Terrace, London, W.2.

\* \* \* \* \*

Something very remarkable and fine has just been noticed in the Press. Something which should have made us pause to think. For a little over a fortnight ago the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children helped its five millionth child. It is true that there is little satisfaction in the fact that the N.S.P.C.C. have found it necessary to help so many children, or that their work is every bit as necessary to-day, as when it was begun, but cruelty to children, though an ever present evil, seldom reaches the diabolical depths known to us through the pages of Dickens. That this is so is due very substantially to the work of the N.S.P.C.C., which makes it its business to hear about cases of cruelty long before the child's life has been ruined. For the last twelve years the N.S.P.C.C. has been under the direction of Mr. W. J. Elliott, O.B.E., who joined the Society as Secretary in 1922. Five million



children now owe their chance in life to Mr. Elliott and his predecessors, and to a Society which will continue to watch over the lives of children for many years to come.

\* \* \* \* \*

The National Council of Social Service has produced a handbook of sixty-four pages entitled *Out of Adversity*, a survey of the Clubs for Men and Women which have grown out of the needs of unemployment. The price is sixpence. It is hoped that for this modest expenditure many men and women will take the opportunity to learn something of the work of the National Council among the unemployed. It was in 1932 that the Government decided to place certain funds at the disposal of the National Council of Social Service to enable it to develop its work among the unemployed. The money has been spent on providing premises and encouraging activities of the best kind. To-day there are nearly 900 clubs for men and 500 for women with a total membership of 120,000 men and 40,000 women. It is believed that the clubs will establish themselves as permanent social institutions, serving those who live in the shadow of unemployment and on low wages. In most clubs members pay a weekly subscription of one penny or twopence. *Out of Adversity* gives a clear picture of the activities, discussing the clubs as they are at present and in relation to their future development.

\* \* \* \* \*

London has again had the opportunity of seeing James Bridie's lovely play *Tobias and the Angel*, at the Open Air Theatre, Regent's Park. Moreover the weather at last decided to be really kind and the play enjoyed, as it deserves, a good run. Leslie French was Tobias, an invitation in itself to draw many to the Park, and Robert Eddison brought a rich dignity to the part of Raphael. The last play to be performed in the Open Air Theatre this year is *The Taming of the Shrew* by William Shakespeare.

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For some time a group of people has been working with Mr. Roberts, M.P. and the Parliamentary Committee for Spain to establish in London a Society for Anglo-Iberian Culture. The chief object of this is to provide a much needed cultural and social centre where exiled, refugee, and visiting Spanish and Spanish-American writers, artists, scientists and others can meet not only each other but also their English colleagues and English people interested in Spain and its culture. There are many distinguished patrons of the Society but money is required to finance the project. This is being raised by an appeal for donations and advance membership subscriptions, which are: Founder Members £25; Life Members, £5 5s.; London Members, 10s. 6d.; Country and Student Members, 5s. Remittances should be sent and made payable to the Hon. Treasurer of the Appeal Fund: A. R. L. Walton, Esq., Chartered Accountant, 59-60, Chancery Lane, London, W.C.2. Cheques should be crossed "a/c A.I.S."